

# Grass Roots

Craft and self-sufficiency

For down to earth people

\$2.50

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Gipsy Touring

Patchwork

Choosing a House  
Cow

Kero Fridges

Rabbits

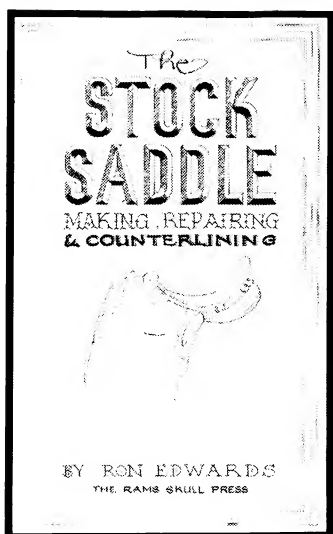
Plant Viruses





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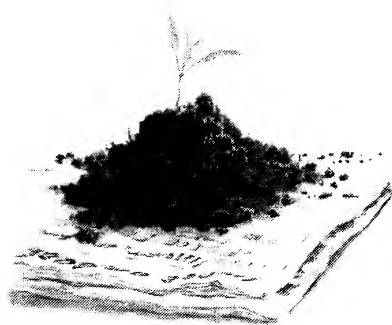
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NOTE: This book is in limited supply due to a short print run.

# SURVIVING IN THE EIGHTIES

## Surviving in the Eighties

Michael Boddy and Richard Beckett  
Illustrated by Janet Dawson Boddy



By Michael Boddy and Richard Beckett

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- Front Cover: When thinking of building your own home, consider mud bricks. The raw material is inexpensive, readily available and bricks are easy to handle. Your friends can also have a great time mixing the clay as Robyn, on our cover, discovered. For advice on handling council constraints see P. 35.
- Back Cover: A Grass Roots reader who runs a silk screen business asked if he could print our logo on T-shirts. We suggested aprons as well (for all those men in harness). They are quite attractive in fawn with brown trim. Available from Expressscreen – see their advertisement on P. 51.

Distributed to newsagents by Gordon & Gotch.

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Friends,

Would someone be able to tell me how to get rid of blackberries or alternatively to control their spread in some way. I am living in a sea-side village where some of the blackberries are helping to hold together part of the foreshore, but where other patches of blackberries are starting to encroach across the roadways and private property. There has been talk amongst the residents of using 245T but I am totally opposed to the use of chemicals and have voiced my opinion at a residents' meeting. I hope someone can help me with a solution to this problem.

**Rosemary Box,  
6 May Street,  
CANNONS CREEK 3977.**

## Dear David & Meg Miller,

I was alarmed to read in your issue No.31 of June 1982 an item by Mr. Derek Wrigley in the column Feedback Link-Up Feedback expressing concern at being thwarted in his efforts to obtain Tilapia and asking your readers if they might help him secure some of these exotic fishes. Mr. Wrigley notes in passing that this species is 'officially unobtainable in Australia' and that it is 'potentially a greater pest than carp'. He suggests that 'in a protein hungry world' he should be allowed to raise these (and perhaps other species).

It is of course true that some parts of the world are short of protein but the possibility of meeting that shortage by cultivating Tilapia in Australia is really a pipe dream which totally ignores the enormous danger to the habitat and fish of the Murray Darling system that would attend this venture and possibly some logistic problems.

Australian freshwater fish are seriously affected by many environmental problems and not the least of these is competition in many areas from introduced fishes. In hindsight, one or two of the exotics could be said to have benefited Australia, but others such as carp have been disastrous. There is no known way of eliminating such species of fish once it has become established in a river. The very great concern which has been widely expressed in some countries where Tilapia has become established,

and the early studies which have been made of this fish as it rampages through certain waters in Queensland, fully justify the thought that it may be a greater pest than carp.

Mr. Wrigley says that he would 'willingly pay' for some small Tilapia. My fervent hope is that readers who may be in a position to catch and sell small fish, would regard his request in the same way as all thinking Australians. If Tilapia became established in the Murray Darling system, the ultimate cost to the many fine native fishes in this system and the effect on water quality, are impossible to predict, but the damage each year would be enormous and mostly irreparable.

**J.C.F. Wharton,  
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on  
Import and Export of Live Fish and Endangered Species.**

## Dear People,

Does anyone know of a place where we can rent a house on some land and where our two boys (aged 3½ and 2 years) can mix with other 'grass roots' children? I want to be involved in helping my boys to learn, not just be taught. I have no formal training – just lots of ideas and enthusiasm. I would like to become involved in a community school or even start one. We would appreciate any help or advice offered.

**John, Ann, Daniel & Benjamin Vancea,  
17 Falcon Street,  
HAZELBROOK 2778.**

## Dear Readers,

In the Australian Women's Weekly dated July 7th, an article appeared regarding the erosion and exploitation on land on the Monaro Plateau between Canberra and Eden. The point of the article is to tell people that a task force has been set up to draw up a National Conservation Strategy and they are asking people to write to them with constructive ideas about what has gone wrong and what can be done to rectify existing damage to the country, both rural and urban.

I am sure many G.R. readers would have something worthwhile to contribute. Don't let this opportunity pass to participate in reshaping our country for our own and future generations. The address to write to is Dr. George Wilson, Director, National Conservation Strategy, P.O. Box 1252, Canberra City 2601.

**Barbara Chalker,  
12 Framont Avenue,  
HOLLAND PARK 4121.**

## Dear Grass Roots Ladies,

I am in my fifties (a divorcee) suffering the typical middle aged masculine bachelor syndrome. I would like to meet a lady 37 years of age or younger. I need a typist, business person, botanist, herbalist, cook, gardener, photographer, van driver, alternative healer all wrapped up in a neat package of a young diplomatic female who is willing to help me put my philosophy into practice. I am slim built, 5 ft 6 in tall, don't drink or smoke, take drugs or gamble. I am a Sagittarian.

**Roy Wallace,  
43 Diddot Street,  
KURABY 4112.  
Ph. 341-3592.**

## Dear G.R. Friends,

We are a couple who have been reading G.R. for only a short time and for the past few years have tried to save money to buy our own place. We have been unsuccessful in saving any reasonable amount due to a few different reasons and now we can no longer stand the strains of city life as we are both from the country originally. We have had experience in building, animals and organic gardening. Would any reader in the Castlemaine -Ballarat area have a place on their property where we could build a small cabin and grow a few vegies. We will be willing to work on the land in return for the rent.

**Rob & Ann Bell,  
C/- 2 Bottlebrush Drive,  
WERRIBEE 3030.**



Edited by Meg and David Miller.

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Grass Roots is produced for those who wish to regain control over their lifestyle by exploring the alternatives to modern mass consumption. Whether you've just started out or you're an old hand, why not share your experience and knowledge with other readers of Grass Roots. All contributions of articles and photos are welcome.

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# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Folks,

Could someone please help me with information on soya beans? Do they like a hot or cold climate? What type of soil do they require? Where can I get the seeds? Can I use the ones from the Health Food shops?

**Ilsa Dehn,  
1 Belbrook Road,  
UPWEY 3158.**

## Dear Meg & David,

Thanks for a great magazine full of warmth and sincerity. I can see that in many ways it is a labour of love. However, I was disappointed to read your editorial comment (G.R. No. 28, p.13) with reference to enquiries for information on natural birth control methods.

I don't think I would be alone in believing that such matters should be common knowledge amongst *all* members of our society – male and female, adult and child alike – rather than being shunted into the 'plain wrapper' category because of its 'delicate nature' as you put it. In that same copy of Grass Roots can be found graphic descriptions of goat gynaecology, a drawing of earthworm genitals plus lascivious details of their lovemaking techniques, as well as the usual wealth of hints on plant propagation. All these things interest me greatly, but I fail to see why human propagation methods must remain such a darkly-clothed secret. I would like to see articles in Grass Roots on both the subjects mentioned by Meg: the Ovulation method and natural methods of dealing with menstruation. After all, it is claimed that Grass Roots is produced for those who wish to regain control over their lifestyle by exploring the alternatives to modern mass consumption'. Human sexuality is one aspect of our lifestyle which is still floundering in the grip of modern technology (try going to a Family Planning Clinic for information on natural birth control methods and you'll most likely find them still trying to press the usual array of drugs and devices on you). One can only escape from this consumerism if one has reliable knowledge of alternatives.

**Judith Torley,  
Millpost,  
P.O. Box 12,  
BUNGENDORE 2621.**

## Dear Judith,

*Thank you for your stimulating thoughts and suggestions. We agree wholeheartedly with you and can say only that in trying to steer a middle path and not offend anyone's beliefs and sensibilities, we have been too conservative. As you said, one can only escape from the grip of consumerism where the alternatives are around and available. Independence and the ability to make a considered choice are part of the value system of Grass Roots.*

*Meg & David.*

## Dear Grass Roots People,

I am 25 years old and a fourth year Arts/Law Student (Sydney Uni). Keith and I took last year off to try a Grass Roots existence on the opal fields as we felt we wanted to make a permanent move to a 'back to basics' lifestyle.

However, I wanted to finish off my Degree, having gone so far, especially as there are many occasions when Grass Roots people have to resort to legal advice. Personally, I feel that legal advice can be given on a barter system basis and in fact, have recently worked with solicitors who sometimes manage to do just that.

Now, to the point – I am wondering if there is a solicitor somewhere out there who holds similar views. I am looking for a Summer Clerkship for Dec-Feb 1982/83 with a view to employment as a solicitor when I finish my degree at the end of 1983. I have good results to date with honours in Government in my Arts degree and a fair bit of legal experience, having worked as a secretary for three firms of solicitors. I feel I would have no trouble finding employment in the city but would rather work in the country with someone who has a compatible outlook. I also wonder whether there is anyone in Sydney who might have work acceptable to a guy with a very unmaterialistic, grass roots outlook as

Keith is finding it difficult to settle back into his old career of credit management. Beyond the necessity of allowing us to pay the rent and eat, he would like something which might allow more job satisfaction than shuffling papers. He is very handy as an amateur carpenter and I have never known anything mechanical he could not fix. He has done all sorts of things from running a ski lift in the Snowy Mountains to a little opal mining. He would like to have experience building or repairing stringed instruments but is open to all sorts of possibilities. We will be in Sydney for 18 months – 2 years.

**Carol Booth,  
122 Church Street,  
CAMPERDOWN 2050.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

For many years I have been an avid reader of your magazine and other books. Now I have taken a step towards my land. I am now the proud owner of a beautiful Toggenburg doe and I find Pat Coleby's advice very helpful. I have put the cart very much before the horse because I still have no land. I will have enough money by Christmas so if anyone knows of 5-10 acres down the Channel area of Tassy please let me know. Also I would love to hear from any Grass Roots people down the Channel and Huon areas. If anyone would like a willing hand in exchange for practical knowledge please write.

**Maree McGinniss,  
12 Kenton Road,  
GEILSTON BAY 7015.**

## Dear Fellow Fryers,

I have just moved into an aluminium clad shed on my 75 acres. No electricity, no running water and at the moment, no usable tank. Pan toilet and unable to get it emptied because I am not on a small block. I have a fuel stove in which the oven has rusted out.

I am very happy most of the time and I know I will love it here when I get to know someone as I have been here only one month. I hope to become self-sufficient but firstly I have to organise my home into being a little more comfortable. So if there are any gregarious G.R. readers here or near abouts – help!

**Skye,  
C/- Post Office,  
CLARENCE TOWN 2321.**

## Dear Readers,

I really believe co-operative or community living is the only way for me to go. I intend to make a brief trip to Rockhampton late this year and I would like the opportunity to look in on some of the co-operatives and communes on the way there and back. I am basically looking for ideas, housing styles and how families with school age children manage when the location is isolated. I will be travelling by road and would appreciate if anyone interested to show their lifestyle, could drop me a line or two. I will answer all letters.

**Neil Iversen,  
P.O. Box 592,  
MUSWELLBROOK 2333.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

After doing a course on Cinva rammed earth bricks, we firmly decided to build this way. After months of searching through books we are unable to find any details on these machines. We found the supplier of the equivalent in Queensland but with limited money found that the cost was too high. Friends have offered to construct the machine for material cost only if we can provide the details. As we are about to start construction on our humble home we are desperate!! Is there anybody, anywhere who would be able to send us details of measurements on one of these machines please.

**Tim and Wendy O'Dea,  
M.S./612,  
KINGAROY 4610.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Readers,

We moved to S-E N.S.W. at the start of the year. Pete stayed within his field and has a good job. I felt sure I would find work too as I am a nursing sister and am able to do office work, plus I told everyone, 'I've never been out of work yet'. In other words I am keen to work and felt that I would find something. Well the problem is, we love the area and are buying ten acres and plan to build mud brick style starting with a small shed to live in, but financially it will be really hard if I am not contributing. I have come to realise that jobs don't always go to the most qualified so I hope to find some way to make some money from home. Do any readers have any suggestions or success stories to share? I am young, healthy and keen, can cook and sew but can't pot or anything and have limited capital to outlay to start off in something.

**Karen Thomas,  
226 Imlay Street,  
EDEN 2551.**

## Dear Fellow Readers,

Grass Roots revolves about a humanist perspective. Closeness to nature somehow provides hope especially to 20th century people who by shared guilt, rape and pillage destroy mother earth as never before. And one must expect a whole range of views and attitudes from the hard heart with just a glimpse of green bud to a fiery passionate concern.

Just as G.R. writers in their letters have been standing up for Link-up and Feedback and the possibility of men and women coming together fairly for love or co-habitation, I would like to make a loving criticism of hostility shown to dope smokers. Though I am squarely opposed to hard drugs of addiction like heroin, Coca Cola and television, I always remember the lesson Jews have learnt. When whole classes of people are proscribed as the vulgar Americans tell it, kiss your ass goodbye. So when people are smug enough to write 'no dope smokers' perhaps they could explain what it is about smoking that they fear and dislike.

Hard times have born into my seeing clear judgments about the people I know and the quality of their hearts. Good people can be found in the most surprising of places and less good people often appear sanctified by their fellows.

Finally many thanks to your magazine for some good friends and literary romances. I give my heart to poor gypsy women and their children who are invited to visit or write or smile at my folly.

**Robin Horowitz,  
Old Telegraph Road,  
Rokeby R.S.D.,  
via DROUIN 3818.**

## Dear People,

I am just starting into some sort of self-sufficiency — only a small patch of vegies this year though I hope to do a bit better next summer. I don't know if I would be game enough to try a full commitment to this lifestyle but the way the world is shaping up we may all have no choice. We have just lost our little mum and my mate of 15 years, and though we try and not be too sad at our loss it leaves a big empty space in your life when you lose your partner. I am wondering if there is a lady who would like to write to me. I will be 49 this month so being a Cancer person I am very attached to my home and children namely 11 year old Lindy, a part Aboriginal and Michael who is just 16.

I have just found a job with the Parks & Gardens at Ringwood. It is a big adjustment after being my own boss all my life but it's a lot more peaceful instead of chasing the almighty dollar all the time. I am hoping to have a go at the alternative lifestyle in a few years when this property is paid for. I will see if the kids want to join me or not as I don't think I have the right to enforce my ideas on them anyway.

Wishing you all every success in your chosen lifestyles. God be with you always.

**Ron Lyons,  
56 Stradbroke Road,  
MONTROSE 3765.**

## Dear Folk,

Does anyone know anything about growing date palms (for fruit) from seed and does anyone know where to get a moon planting chart for the purpose of planting vegies and also information on companion planting for vegies.

**Errol & Irene Baxter,  
Mail Bag 85,  
Yowah Opal Fields,  
via CUNNAMULLA 4490.**

## Dear Grass Roots Friends,

I've just poured the next slab for the children's rooms and can sit back and regain my energy for when the timbers are delivered. We are suffering from an acute wind shortage — yes, even here on the 'Windy Isle' — and due to a stupid raid on the batteries just to cool one bottle of bubbly for a party, I now have to use the kero lamps and battery radio again. I think I may have to add a solar cell to my system as summer here is amazingly windless.

I'd love more information on combating the common ailment of hay fever/sinusitis naturally. I believe it is a psychosomatic thing but after two days of exhausting sneezes, at least ten at a time, I would welcome something I could do or take or stop doing, to be rid of the problem. Also, have you more recipes of preserving foods which don't depend on electrical appliances such as vitamiser or freezer?

In answer to Marilyn and Mavis Rowe about washing and ironing. I must admit to cheating for washing as there is a laundromat here and while the machines do my work for me I have an excuse to socialise in town. I had to construct my own temporary long line in the wind to hang the clothes to dry and of course, if you fold everything as you take them off the line they won't need ironing. I haven't touched one for months but have a set of three heavies for the combustion stove and a gas one for real emergencies. Other tricks like rolling T-shirts and jumpers and sleeping on trousers work well but I find useful basic clothes which are comfortable to wear and work in don't really need too much special presentation anyway.

Must go now — car must go to garage for new shock absorbers and exhaust system and I'm going to ride my bike the twenty miles home just for fun. I hope it doesn't rain.

**Robin Eades,  
R.S.D. 119,  
Naracooopa,  
KING ISLAND 7256.**

## Dear People,

I received the latest Grass Roots only a few days ago and have read it all with great enjoyment, dog-eared pages to remind myself to order something here and write to someone there. One of the dog-eared pages (a bad habit, I know) is p. 100, where Sarah and Peter write about their wish to have a home birth. It started me thinking, so I'll share some of these thoughts with you. We have a darling daughter who is nearly three and our second child is due in eight weeks. Before we had children, we were interested in home births and I had a talk about it to a friend who is a triple certificated nurse. Although unsure, she was willing to think about it. We know a couple whose second child was delivered at home by the father and for them it was a wonderful experience.

There are two questions I would like to ask and discuss briefly.

Should the mother be under a doctor's care throughout the pregnancy even if she feels fit and well and everything seems normal? I worry that in the enthusiasm over the idea of home births not enough qualified supervision is included. My own experience has made me feel this way. I felt wonderful through my whole pregnancy both times, yet I had to spend nearly a month in hospital during the first one. I developed toxemia during the seventh month and it came to the stage where Heather's life was endangered because of deprivation of oxygen and sustenance, so she was induced 3½ weeks early. The doctor picked up this condition in my regular visits. I had no inkling of it such as dizziness,



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

fluid retention or swollen ankles. If I had not been under medical care she could have been still-born. Another aspect might be mothers whose blood is incompatible with that of the unborn child and of course there are other circumstances.

What if complications arise during the birth? No matter how well prepared a mother is concerning control of breathing and relaxation she cannot predict how she will handle a breech birth or a face upward presentation. Should easy access to a doctor or hospital be ensured in case a home birth goes wrong? I realise this might sound very pessimistic and I know many births go without a hitch but I feel strongly that one must be fully prepared for anything. We cannot be too careful where the lives and well being of a mother and child are at stake.

**Rita Summers,  
'Kensbrook',  
Blackwood Farm,  
PIONEER 7254.**

## Dear Folks,

We are a middle aged couple seeking a care-taking position on a Victorian country property. Husband is handy-man, Jack-of-all-trades with many years on the land. We are interested in quiet country living. Hope someone can help us.

**M. Chard,  
Main Road,  
TOOLAMBA 3614.  
Phone 058-265-385.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

Diane Piera will find great success in the treatment of asthma if she follows the advice in Jethro Kloss' *Back to Eden*, p. 388. This treatment is what is needed for a permanent type cure.

In emergencies, for an asthma attack, there is a herb that will bring instant relief but should not be relied upon for everyday use. It is *Lobelia* but since this is difficult to obtain in Australia, we have to rely on the indigenous variety *Lobelia purpurea* (white flowers) or *Lobelia membranacea* (mauve-blue flowers). This herb is described and illustrated on p. 233 of a book put out by the Qld. D.P.I. called *Weeds of Queensland* (available from D.P.I. Meiers Road, Indooroopilly 4068, priced at \$14). The dose is 3-4 tbs of the infusion made from the whole plant - 1 tsp dried or small handful fresh to 1 pint boiling water. This is anti-spasmodic and sedative, relaxing to the system and subduing spasm. A specific for paralysis of the lungs and tongue. Too much lobelia will cause vomiting (often called for in the case of an asthma attack) but an overdose can cause death and is narcotic and depressive. The counter-active to an overdose is an infusion of cayenne (*Capsicum minimum*) had as tea. For asthma generally, include raw garlic in the diet and a few fresh comfrey leaves daily also elderberries and juice if you have them - carrots, onion and radish. All of these are blood building and mucus cleansing. Do not have a heavy meal late at night - try to have the main meal at midday and before bed have any one, or a combination, of the following teas: sage, mint, thyme, marjoram, lavender, eucalyptus or peppermint.

Sandfly bites can be relieved by applying fresh *Aloe vera* gel. Plants of this 'jelly cactus' don't mind growing indoors as pot plants or in dappled shade outside.

For Trina Smythe of Angourie: We (Meltone Herbal Products) make an all natural witch hazel-yarrow cream which seems to be reasonably effective for nappy rash because of its cooling astringent effect. Straight witchazel from the chemist may work but is better for baby's skin combined in an emollient base.

To the Gippsland Self-Sufficiency Group. We make our own soap and after ploughing through many useless formulas, we came across a small book which provided the starting point for what is now a full time venture. This book has gone its way now as books have a habit of doing. I think it was *Soapmaking Made Easy*, written by Dorothy Richter. She describes how to make a transparent glycerin soap. We have never tried

this ourselves, but good luck anyway. Maybe we can swap bars when you complete your experiment?

To J. Dodd, Leura. Natural repellent for mosquitoes is citronella oil, a spot dabbed here and there. The chemist sells a citronella compound that is effective. Also, pennyroyal oil works on mosquitos and fleas and lavender oil repels mosquitoes while it soothes the nerves. Don't overdo it. Dilute the essential oils about 1:10 in water (less for a child and much less for a baby), shake up and apply sparingly here and there.

As for flies - keep the place clean, burn incense with basil or eucalyptus oil rubbed on it and hope for the best. Flies are pretty tough.

Has anyone discovered a sure fire *natural* cure for ants? We have an impossible plague of them at the moment.

M. Boetji of Rubyvale, mentions the use of moulds for soaps. We would like to add that plastic knife and fork trays can be used, the holeless ones with three compartments alongside and one at the end. Wriggle soaps free by twisting the mould gently and slice into three or four bars each. Also paperweight (plastic) individual moulds can be used. These, and synthetic dyes and scents for soap and candle making are available from the Queensland Craft Centre, George Street, Brisbane City. If you want to use natural scents and dyes, which you should, you can experiment with various strengths and combinations of essential oils. We can help with addresses of suppliers if you are interested. The only natural dyes we've found to work so far are paprika powder and tumeric powder.

**Meltone Herbal Products,  
P.O. Box 489,  
ATHERTON 4883.  
Ph: 070-950-268.**

## Dear G.R. Folk,

I love your chook articles. I am a fanatical backyard chooker with a motley collection of mongrel chooks, many with odd names!! I have a rooster that my younger son hatched in a borrowed incubator in his bedroom and I reared in an electric frypan in my bedroom! He is known as Mr. Cocky and his wife, Mrs. Cocky, who was hatched under a duck and reared in the frypan by me is now rearing four odd looking chickens very successfully.

**Ann Walker,  
'Broomtail' Magazine,  
'Hughenden',  
R.S.D.,  
EAGLEHAWK 3556.**

## Dear Grass Roots People,

I am an 18 year old female (unemployed) living at home. We are interested in organic gardening and alternative living/self-sufficiency. My special interest is herbs (all kinds) and I would love to take up weaving. If anyone has a loom to sell or plans for one I would be most grateful. Look forward to your letters.

**Robyn Godman,  
Box 195,  
DEVONPORT 7310.**

## Dear People,

We would be happy to meet any G.R. folk on your travels, particularly Renate. There is room for a van or tent for a couple of days but please write first.

Anyone who has a child with a bed-wetting problem could try this - effervescent calcium two or three times each day. It cured my son who had this trouble constantly for some years. The cure was recommended by a very fine Brisbane doctor for nervous problems at examination time mainly. When tried, it cured the bed-wetting problem. Hope this helps someone else.

**L. Seaman,  
C/- Post Office,  
BUNDABERG 4670.**



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear G.R. People,

We are looking for a self-esteemed couple interested in alternative building, country living and eventually participating in running a business. We are building on Princes Highway No. 1, a tea and coffee house, small bakery, workshop for our clogs, etc. also crafts and bulk food selling. So far, we have built from old wooden slabs, dirt bricks, rock, bark and clay.

We live on a farm separated from the shop where we run goats and chooks and have a vegetable garden. 'The Bungalow' is vacant. We have no electricity or telephone so you will have to write to us. All letters answered and visitors welcome.

**D. & J. Karlsson,  
Timbillica,  
via EDEN 2551.**

## Dear Helpful People,

I would like to have a recipe for toothpaste without salt as I wish to avoid salt as much as possible.

Also I am going to be travelling around Queensland in June/July/August and would like to meet as many G.R. people as possible, even to travel with them. All letters will be answered.

**Leigh Harris,  
P.O. Box 16,  
TUART HILL 6060.**

## Dear Grass Roots People,

I am glad to see the New Gipsland Seed Farm mentioned from time to time in Grass Roots. I have obtained my seeds from them for a while now and have had excellent results. Gladstone is not a crash hot locality for growing things and the friendly advice, service and consideration of that firm have been appreciated.

**Bob Domoney,  
102 O'Connell Street,  
GLADSTONE 4680.**

## Dear Grass Roots Family,

I have been reading this magazine for only four months and I must say I can't wait till the next. I'm in the throes of selling my home and business and want to get out of the rat race. I would like to settle back into W.A. on a few acres. I want to hear from people who may be able to help and advise me and who have suitable land for sale with or without a home. I would prefer an old home because I intend to build my own rammed earth home in time. I want all the replies I can get and would delight in calling on people as soon as we can. All help and advice gratefully received.

**G. & L. Hughes,  
2 Parap Place,  
PARAP N.T. 5790.**

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

I wonder if anyone can help me with what may seem an unusual request? I am an artist/craftswoman trying to support myself by selling my various endeavours, one of which is leatherwork. My problem is a specific one. I have been a vegetarian for some time and since becoming one have discontinued leatherwork and concentrated more on developing other talents. I have recently decided to try and return to leatherwork but do not wish to buy commercially available animal skins i.e. the products of the slaughterhouse, as I feel I would be compromising my principles in doing so. I would therefore be very grateful if any reader could avail me of a cow skin which previously belonged to a well-looked after animal which died peacefully and painlessly and had not been subjected to the various rigours of most normal cows in the meat and skin trade. I would be very happy to pay for the skin and to tan it myself if necessary. In India, the Hindus use only the skins of 'naturally dead animals'. Is it possible to find the equivalent in Australia?

**Elizabeth Ordinans,  
8 Osborne Street,  
GARDENVALE 3185.**

## Dear Friends,

We are a couple in our thirties with four children. Soon we will be selling our home at Bateau Bay and would dearly love to buy between 25 to 100 acres with or without a house in any condition. It would have to be within 50 km of a town for the children's schooling. We will have about \$40,000 cash for house and land and love the country around Scone but would consider anywhere. If anyone can help please write.

**A. & M. Bourke,  
20 Papala Ave.,  
BATEAU BAY 2261.**

## Dear Folks,

Is there anyone at all who can repair a saucepan for me? I burnt a potato to the bottom of it and consequently half the pot came away. Now the patch has rusted and the manufacturers advised me to throw it away. It is one of an expensive stainless steel set and is not replaceable. Whatever happened to the travelling 'tinker'? I guess the throw-away society rendered him redundant!

**Linda Pottage,  
C/- 13 Stewart Avenue,  
SOUTH CURL CURL 2096.**

## Dear M & D,

Recently Mel and I moved into this beautiful area away from the daily 'drudge' of Melbourne life to go 'back to the land'. We bought 40 acres which included an old timber house that we intend modernising to a degree. It is a very peaceful existence and we heartily recommend it to any city folk. We have a great deal to do with the 'locals' and are aware of many beautiful properties with excellent soil and water available in the area, so if anyone is looking for a piece of land to build their dreams on be it 10 acres or 100 acres, we would be only too pleased to help them.

Congratulations on such an illuminating and encouraging magazine which gives us hours of enjoyment and a feeling of affinity with those like us who have or wish to make the break.

Did you know molasses is good for internal ulcers?

**Shirley and Kel Gowing,  
P.O. Box 32,  
TIARO 4650.  
Ph. 071-292-223.**

## Dear Folks,

We are elderly pensioners and live on a large farm in a small cottage. We went on a farm when we married. As I was from a country seaside home, I made a few mistakes at first. One was trying to burn up an old kapok mattress by putting it down a hole and lighting it with some papers and burning material. Some time later I heard an explosion and found the whole bush around was covered with thread and bits of rag. When it rained it was a nasty looking mess. It took a long time to clean it up and a long time to live it down.

I would like to know if any reader has a recipe for stove blacking? I don't want any that comes off on the saucepans.

**Hazel Loveridge,  
Box 215,  
GNOWANGERUP 6335.**



## Dear Readers,

I'm about to start an adventure in mud brick and stone with a view to establishing a permanent domicile after long enough the itinerant. Can offer full board and lodging overlooking the Pacific to an able bodied Ms. in exchange for real involvement in, and support during, the project. Dalliance is not sought (regards to Cathy and Alricha, Feedback G.R. 28), but a mutually rewarding on-going relationship sure is. An appetite for fresh seafood a must.

**Denis Carmody,  
Mogareeka Avenue,  
TATHRA 2550.**



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Friends,

For anyone commencing a vegie garden or worm farm, *wait*. I read an article lately in the daily papers about a professional worm farmer in the Mulwala area who has had to stop using sheep manure as part of the compost mixture because the additives to combat most worms in sheep also either destroy or discourage earthworms. We all know the value of these blessed little wrigglers in the vegie patch for turning over the soil. I now wonder if any of the cattle drenches have the same danger? Oh well, looks like we'll have to rely on fowl manure as at least we can govern what they eat.

My lady (future wife) Jeannie and I have only recently moved to Broadford and are setting up what we can on our quarter acre. It's not much, but after the concrete, noise and lack of privacy of the block of flats we were bound to previously, we are getting right into it. I have to commute to Melbourne for my regular toil as a male nurse but as I work two days on and two days off (12 hour shifts), we have so far constructed a chook pen, dug and planted the first vegies, renewed the back fence and Jeannie made some beautiful quince jam with our old tree up the back supplying the fruit. Later we would like to expand to a few acres when time and the almighty dollar permit.

**Lawrie & Jeannie Heaney,  
P.O. Box 180,  
BUNDOORA 3083.**

## Dear People,

Someone was asking now to process cashew nuts. Queensland Department of Primary Industry sent me the following information.

When considering the process of the nuts it should be remembered that the shell of the nut contains a blistering caustic sap which is released if the shell is damaged in any way. *Do not attempt to crack any of the unprocessed nuts.* The processing consists of roasting the nuts at 350°F-400°F (180°C-200°C) for 10-20 minutes on fine sand to extract the caustic cashew nut oil. The oil may spurt from the shells when the nuts are heated. During this initial roasting the sand will take up the oil and also prevent the oil from spurting. *Never attempt this initial roasting without first either covering the nuts with sand, otherwise have a lid on the container.* The temperature used for roasting has to be hot enough to cause the oil to exude from the shell of the nut but not hot enough to cause the kernel to dry out. Temperatures of 450°-500°F will cause the oil to vapourise and issue as a choking cloud from the oven as well as causing the kernel to dry out. Care should be taken to inhale a minimum of the fumes given off during roasting. Preferably use an old dish for the initial roasting as the oil may be difficult to remove after baking is finished.

After the initial roasting, the nuts are sieved out of the sand and washed in water and detergent to remove the final traces of oil. Care should be taken not to wipe your face or eyes with your hands while washing or cracking the nuts because of the possible residue of caustic oil. The nut is then cracked and the kernel freed of the thin brown skin. The final process is roasting the kernel in coconut oil at 300°F (150°C) for 5 minutes.

**Mrs. M. Frey,  
P.O. Box 1382,  
ROCKHAMPTON 4700.**

## Hello Grass Roots People,

Could anyone there please write to pass on the address of anywhere in Australia I may have a chance of getting a steady government job like a postman, on railways or irrigation in a small country town or rural area? The details of who to apply to for such a job and the full address would be much appreciated. I am a single man considering migrating to Australia. Please write if you have any suggestions at all of a permanent job anywhere rurally there. Promise to acknowledge all letters gratefully.

**Ken Everett,  
C/- Dobson Sub Station,  
WESTLAND N.Z.**

## Dear G.R. People,

I wonder if others have gone through a cycle like we have. We were very taken up with organic gardening and self-sufficiency some years ago, then, after we had sold our suburban Adelaide house, moved to Tasmania and bought our 'paradise'. We slowly became more and more disenchanted (probably partly because the ideals we placed on ourselves were too severe to live with), until we sold up and moved back to suburban Adelaide. From there we decided to try our hand at commercial farming and bought our property in the Clare Valley, S.A.

Now we've turned a complete circle and find ourselves once again buying and devouring G.R. magazine with great gusto. Unfortunately, being so long out of the 'G.R. scene', we feel a little lost without the contact of like-minded people; the friends we used to have. We're both in our early thirties with three kids - Linda 13, Joanna 11 and William 4. We're not vegetarian but respect those who are and enjoy a port in the winter and a beer in the summer. We'd love to hear from G.R. people who feel like writing to us - people near us or not so near.

This time we think we're getting back to the life we were meant to live (with the moderation that comes from the wounds along the way).

**Bruce & Jane Gilham and Family,  
'Springwood',  
P.O. Box 343,  
CLARE 5453.**

## Dear Meg and David,

It has taken me so long to put pen to paper and congratulate you and all those who contribute to a wonderful magazine. I've never been into reading magazines before but G.R. is surely an exception. My husband, Graeme, and I eagerly await each new copy and hope, one day, to get a bit of land somewhere on which to live a self-sufficient lifestyle - hopefully before our six week old son, Tommy goes to school. I am wondering if anyone out there has a good recipe for a shampoo made with soapwort root that will keep for fairly long periods as I like to make my cosmetics, etc. in large quantities. I found an old recipe but have discovered that some of the essential ingredients are unobtainable.

**Liz, Graeme and Tommy Walker,  
5 Myrtle Grove,  
TECOMA 3160.**

## Dear Grass Roots Reader,

I am a mother and I have three sons with four dogs and we are looking around for a farm house. The boys are looking for odd jobs and can do tractor driving if need be. The house must have septic tank and hot and cold water, SEC, not too far out of town, low rent and no bond.

**Jean R. Howie,  
R.S.D. Yorkshire Road,  
MARONG 3515.**

## Hello,

Here I am at a place called Yandi. It is a line camp on the Mt. Newham to Pt. Hedland iron ore railway line. I'm earning money for my share in 600 acres in northern N.S.W. I miss my farm and friends. I live in an aluminium box, eat disgusting 'food' and work really hard, there are millions of flies, it's too hot and I am surrounded by drunken morons. But this place is good for the bank book, so that's good for my head. Anyway, I am a small person 5 ft 2 in, 9 st - the smallest labourer here. So I have to put more effort to achieve the same result as other workers. The 'food' is white bread, fried meat, boiled tinned vegies and tinned fruit. I would appreciate any advice on supplements to aid my diet and my efforts to put on weight. Also letters from any Grass Roots readers. Any in Pt. Hedland to meet? As I am bored and lonely it would be delightful. I have interests in self-sufficiency, play flute, and am into radiesthesia Wilhelm Riech, UFOs, energy grids, pyramids, Nikola Tesla and dousing. Please write, everybody answered. Dear Arli Wildflower, welcome to Planet earth!

**Nick Ashton,  
C/- P.O. Box 526,  
PT. HEDLAND 6721.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

I have a very old cookery book (1920 edition) which belonged to my grandmother. There are many interesting hints in the back and I thought some of you might be interested.

1. Save all scraps of soap, tie in a muslin bag, put into boiling water for a short time, then plunge into cold water. This will cause the soap to harden again in one piece.
2. To remove mildew stains, wet spots with salt and lemon juice and lay in sun to dry. Repeat if necessary.
3. To remove rust stains, use lemon, salt and starch. Lay in sun.
4. Polishing cream for boots and shoes.
  - 1 oz beeswax
  - ½ oz Castile soap
  - ½ pint turpentine
  - ½ pint water
  - 1 oz white wax

Shred the waxes and soap finely and place in a jar. Pour the turpentine over them, cover and let stand for 24 hours, then add ½ pint of boiling water. Stir one way till cold. Keep in a tightly corked bottle.

**Val Amor,  
10 Bargo River Road,  
TAHMOOR 2573.**

## Dear Fellow Readers,

We are a family of four – Dad, Mum, my sister and myself. Dad works in herbs as a naturopath and he has also built his own greenhouse. We grow our own herbs and vegies, also we have lots of fruit trees. So if you have a problem and are passing our way please drop in.

**John Daly,  
19 Brown Street,  
STAWELL 3380.**

## Dear Meg and David,

In response to my request for information regarding storage of cabbages, I am sure you will be delighted to know that seven replies arrived last week. One reader sent the following suggestion: leave roots and stems attached to cabbages and hang upside down in bundles of six in cool shed. As cabbages are required cut off at stems.

Here are a few simple recipes which may be of interest to readers.

### PRUNES IN PORT WINE

Purchase a few kilograms of prunes (stoned). Pack into jars (do not cook). Cover with port wine – an expensive wine is not necessary. We buy in the flagon for preserving.

### BERGAMOT TEA

Grow some bergamot mint, dry until brittle and add 1 dessertspoon to ½ lb of any household brand of tea.

My Hungarian neighbour gave me this recipe for quick yoghurt. Boil 1 cup of milk, allow to stand until lukewarm and add 2 teaspoons sour cream. Place in refrigerator until cool. Add fruits (fresh or dried) if desired.

**Bronwyn Robertson,  
122 Govetts Leap Road,  
BLACKHEATH 2785.**

## Hullo Fellow G.R. Readers,

We are looking to buy or share land – 10 acres or more – where we can live in quiet seclusion, grow our own food and involve ourselves in our animals, crafts and plants. Hopefully it would be somewhere between Maryborough and Nambour. Water is important but electricity is not desired. We would like to hear from anyone who has or knows of land for sale or anyone interested in sharing with us. Unfortunately we have only \$15,000. We are easy going people who love nature and life. There are three of us – Dave 26, Chris 23 and Jane 2. Also we would love to hear from anyone just wanting to share ideas on self-sufficiency or crafts.

**D.R. Kidd,  
Camp Flat Road,  
BLI BLI 4560.**

## Dear Everyone,

We are a small family (Cathy, Mark and Megan) who have recently moved to Shepparton. We are thinking of building our own home on my father-in-law's farm but the land does not have its own water.

We are interested in getting in touch with people in this area with a view to learning new skills and we'd be very happy to exchange labour for experience. Also it would be great to have someone who understood our aims to talk to. Our interests are mainly mudbrick or stone building, alternative power, butchering, spinning and soap making. Also, our little girl would love some company, so if there is anyone within reasonable distance we could form a playgroup of some sort.

**Cathy and Mark McDonald,  
2 Lisburn Street,  
SHEPPARTON 3630.  
Ph. 058-210-557.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

I am living about 284 km west of Ayres Rock in the heart of a very magical land. This is a totally new environmental experience as I have always lived near the ocean in Coogee N.S.W. My fiancé and myself are Community Advisors on Aboriginal land, living amongst 400 Aboriginal people and eight Europeans.

The soil appears very fertile – virtually untouched by any agriculture. I am still feeling my way with what will grow and what will not. It's my second try at organic gardening which opens up a whole new dimension in so many ways.

I would be very grateful for any advice about the pros and cons of planting in such a climate as this. I have read *A Guide to Organic Gardening* by Roads and found this book very helpful.

**Lyn Hutchins,  
Docker River Community Council,  
Docker River,  
via ALICE SPRINGS 5751.**

## Dear G.R. Readers,

After my letter in G.R. 29 we have received so many helpful suggestions that I find it impossible to reply to each of them but we still would like to thank everyone who took the time writing to us. We have kept all the letters for further reference.

**Tina and Pete van Veen,  
WEDDERBURN 3518.**

## Dear David, Meg & Other Contributors,

Thanks for a super magazine – better all the time. I look forward to reading it because we were hoping to move 'out bush' but business downturn means less money available to buy land and our present property more difficult to dispose of, plus at 39 I'm in 'a delicate condition' again and am forced to take things very easily (dammit!) after amniocentesis, etc. Means I can't handle goat, chook and goose feed so easily and it's so frustrating. Perhaps an article on moving such heavier things, or rather tips on easier moving for incapacitated folks? Such as putting bag in wheelbarrow and ladling it out into buckets, etc. Perhaps these other pregnant lasses who labour in vegie gardens, etc. are younger. I find I cannot even bend or squat for any period without pain! Must not complain – it's all worth it.

**J. Russell,  
116 Arcadia Road,  
ARCADIA 2159.**

## Dear Fellow Readers,

We are now in our own home – it is just a large town block but there are lots of trees and open space around us. Could someone please do an article on birds and how to attract them to the garden, and how to organize a bird bath and feed stand.

Thanks for an interesting and helpful magazine. Yours in Country Life.

**Pheobe Davies,  
North Road,  
CHILTERN 3683.**



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Readers,

Firstly, I must compliment this most useful magazine and the dedicated people who put it together. I discovered it only recently and the brilliant way you have achieved such a personalised, homely, 'one big happy family' atmosphere in your pages, deserves much credit – keep it up.

I live on a small farm on Flinders Island in Bass Strait with some sheep, chooks, garden and an oldish house which I have recently been extending, renovating and modernising. My problem is that my thirteen year old son and I rather rattle around in this place by ourselves and my life seems to lack purpose without a female partner to share the hopes, the joys, the work and the rewards of turning the house into a home and building a sound future together.

I like a quiet, easy going lifestyle with some modern conveniences, and I like to be close to nature and the earth without being fanatical about it. Home life and boating are my main recreations. My farm provides me with some things and I work part time as well as dabbling in some business ventures, although my background is mostly in farming.

Flinders Island has a population of around 1,000, good climate, spectacular scenery, plenty of wildlife, rich farmland, a good school and sporting facilities and a friendly close-knit community. Farming, fishing and a small tourist industry are the main occupations. I would love to correspond with any girls up to my age (41) who may be interested in this lifestyle or to answer any letters from people wanting to know more of Flinders Island.

**Donald D. Napier,  
Lady Barron,  
FLINDERS ISLAND 7255.**



## Dear Folk,

We have just moved to Victoria from Cairns, North Queensland and onto our small farm. Unfortunately all our time is filled at the moment but gradually we will become organised. We have met several interesting people through G.R.

We have wild rosehip bushes around here and I found this recipe for rosehip syrup. I found that without adding the sugar at the end the drink is very presentable. Use freshly picked ripe rosehips, deep red in colour. Crush or grate them and put at once into boiling water, allowing 4 pints water to 2 lb rosehips. Bring back to boiling then put aside for 10 minutes. Strain pulp through a jelly bag and when it has ceased to drip return the pulp from the bag to the pan adding a further 1½ pints of boiling water. Bring back to boiling, leave for 10 minutes and strain as before. Mix the two extracts and boil for 20 minutes. Add sugar if desired (1 lb) and stir until dissolved. Pour into sterilised jars or bottles and seal.

I am trying to reduce my sugar intake but I like preserving – jam making – but don't like the sugar it involves. Is sugar in large quantities essential to make jam set or is it used as an ancient custom? I know that bottling can be done in water instead of syrup and found that article most interesting. Any hints on cutting down on sugar in baking?

Does anyone have any ideas on using excessive rhubarb? I am eating/freezing at top rate and have made some rhubarb wine. How does one make Devonshire Cream?

Renate, what can one use as moulds for tailor's chalk? Is there someone out there who could write an article on re-covering chairs? I am interested but don't know where to start.

Someone asked about no-rubbish teething 'rusks'. I seem to remember that carrots and celery do the trick.

**Ngaira & Rob & Phillip Shorter,  
P.O. Box 179,  
KYNETON 3444.**

## Dear Folks,

A dire warning on feeding dry food to your cats. Unless the cat's water intake increases dramatically, that is to ten times as much, there's a very real danger that the cat will develop F.U.S. (Feline Urological Syndrome) which is stones in the urinary tract, which can be fatal if left too long. Please ask a vet if you have any doubts.

**C. Langford,  
P.O. Box 43,  
ESK 4312.**

## Dear People,

Re Ross Minut and using seaweed. We simply put it on the garden in trailer loads. We hope to retire to our one acre on Mornington Peninsula in approximately eighteen months. Our house is ready and the garden growing well. I am interested in many crafts – spinning, china painting, tapestry to name just a few. Ken is a keen builder and gardener. Our house on the Peninsula is the third one he has built for us.

**E.M. Blake,  
40 Russell Street,  
SURREY HILLS 3127.**

## Dear Readers,

Can anyone tell me how to make junket without using those yukky and artificial tablets? Also cooking with yoghurt?

I love Ian Gunn's cartoons, especially Rosemary and Basil!

**Debbie.**

## Dear Meg, David and Grass Roots People,

We live on a thirty acre farm in the Adelaide hills and since we've been getting G.R. (over the last six months) we are very keen to work towards a more natural lifestyle – one in which we have more choice, rather than being stuck with the subtle external controls of the society at large.

Anne and I are already planning towards doing without electricity, developing an organic garden and we have a wood stove lined up, a solar heater already functioning and we are self-sufficient in water. Anne has now begun a 'no-dig' garden from G.R. instructions and so far it is a breeze. A note to those who are tentative about 'stepping out' of their present environment and 'dropping in' (as Neil Douglas puts it) to an alternative lifestyle. I would simply like to say, I've started, there is a lot to change and we are loving it. In fact, we await keenly each new and exciting step.

A tip for plant people out there. If you've been trying to tie up elkhorn and staghorn ferns only to find the rope rots and the wire rusts, try using your old TV aerial cable. What better use for the aerial wire?

If anyone is in the Forreton S.A. area and would like to make contact phone 389-1208. We'd love to see you.

**d'Arcy White,  
R.S.D. Norsworthy Road,  
FORRESTON 5233.**

## Dear Folk,

We bought two Thermax generators from the U.S. but as yet have not had the time to put them to use. The generators are well made, a reasonable price and the information and drawings are very detailed. I would think they would be ideal for DIY people to build up their own power systems at a reasonable cost. Their address is Thermax, Box 3128, Burlington, Vermont 05401, U.S.A.

**Michael Black,  
13 Ionic Street,  
ROSSMOYNE 6155.**

## Dear Folk,

Could anyone please tell me how to stop those white moths hoeing into my cabbages and cauliflowers. If anyone can help it would be most appreciated.

**Rick Pruckner,  
11 Francis Street,  
WEST HEIDELBERG 3081.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Readers,

Can anyone help me with a good book on bantams or fowls in general that does not have any chemicals, just natural remedies for free range 'chookies'? I know garlic is good to include in their diet about once a week and parsley is good too, also comfrey. We grow comfrey in their pen so they can peck on it at their leisure. With their wheat I sometimes include a handful of kelp granules to act the same as shell grit in cleaning out their systems. For chickens, we made up a special mash for them with wheatgerm, millet meal and raw bran and added water and maybe some milk powder or sprout water. Great stuff — they love it!

Talking about comfrey — we were told recently about making a liquid comfrey for the garden by adding leaves to water and allow to rot — works absolute wonders!!

Does anyone know of some herbs or books (I know of Juliet de Bairacly Levy's *Herbal Handbook For Farm And Stable*) on herbs that are particularly healing and delicious for sheep?

**Wendy Allan & Fern,  
C/- Post Office,  
HEALESVILLE 3777.**

## Dear G.R.,

For Yvonne and prickly heat in the tropics. I think all these humid weather skin ailments have a lot to do with the proliferation of skin bacteria on sweaty, oily skin. Does she bathe frequently in hot water — at least once a day. Hope it helps. She should also try a blood purifier such as herbal teas.

Tina and Peter van Veen have the same problem as we do and lots of others. I've tried organizing a temporary buyers co-op. to purchase solar cells and/or wind generators in bulk. Companies I've written to are agreeable. From my enquiries I've found you can buy a starter set for minimum requirements solar for about \$700-\$800 (approx. 32 watt 2 amp cell and batteries for home lighting). Also found a company selling a British made Wincharger 200 watt wind generator, about \$900. Write to Wind Energy Co., P.O. Box 595, Double Bay 2028. For heaps of information and addresses of manufacturers and distributors of solar equipment write to the Solar Energy Information Centre, 33 Playfair Street, The Rocks, Sydney 2000.

J.A. Robinson re Yucca. In Ecuador I saw the Indians laying the leaves on the highway where the traffic pulverized them, a good adaptation of an ancient culture to the use of a modern machine? Unfortunately I didn't stay to see the next step. Perhaps methods could be found in some text on 'primitive' rural technology.

**Trude.**

## Dear People,

I am hoping that someone can help me with a recipe for Rosella jam. It seems such a pity to throw out the seeds when making the jam. I believe there is a recipe where the seeds are used but I can't find it in my books. I wondered if anyone might be able to help me to locate it.

Also do any North Queensland readers have any Granadilla seeds I could purchase. I would like to try to grow this fruit but plants are not available in this area.

**Mrs. A. Kelly,  
9 Bambarra Street,  
SOUTHPORT 4215.**

## Dear Readers,

From July '82 onwards, I will be on the road leaving Sydney and heading towards S.A. and perhaps right round Australia. I am looking for experience in anything and everything and am intent on learning as many alternative skills as possible e.g. building shelters, farming, care and management of animals and livestock, conservation of soil, plant propagation, chainsaws, pumps and irrigation and car maintenance. I am also interested especially in bush and desert survival, how to find water, etc. Does anyone need an extra pair of hands to help out in return for payment of some sort, food or perhaps some car maintenance now and then, although some monetary payment would be appreciated? It is not

absolutely necessary as I will have enough to stay afloat and envisage working at 'normal' jobs when necessary. At present I'm looking for a Kombi (fitted out) so accommodation won't be a problem, but fresh water and/or access to a shower would be nice and to share a spot near a fireplace would be neat. I'm learning now to ride a horse properly, don't drink (except for occasional celebrations) and am not a religious fanatic. I'm into healthy food though not strictly vegetarian and I am 26. My boxer dog will be travelling with me — he's well trained, friendly and although he looks scary, he's good with kids. (He's been neutered.) My length of stay is open to negotiation. I have not yet planned any specific route to S.A. so please write even if you feel you may be too out of the way. I am looking forward to hearing from G.R. people and I will answer all letters.

I am looking for recipes for travelling (on camp fires and on a gas cylinder stove — simple, healthy and those which conserve fuel). I already have *The Gypsy Cookbook* but would like some tried and true recipes. Also, if anyone can recommend books on the subject I'd be most appreciative.

**Sharyn Lorraine,  
52 Boyer Road,  
BEACON HILL 2100.**

## Dear Folks,

I am now into my fourth year on a co-op. in northern N.S.W. and I love it here. I have many friends here on the land but I still at times feel lonely and the cold winter nights are coming. Is there an earthy lady out there who would like to share this piece of paradise with me? I am thirty years old.

**Gary Pick,  
C/- Post Office,  
UKI 2484.**

## Dear Folks,

My parents lived in the country when they were children and now we are partially moving back. We have found 55 acres of paradise in the Don Valley near Yarra Junction in Victoria. We have 11 acres of bush and there is much more nearby. I am looking forward to putting into practice many of the ideas I have read and heard of, many from Grass Roots. The only hitch is that I am still at school in the city and as I wish to become a forester I must get the best education I possibly can. This means we must stay in the city during the week, still things are looking up and I am getting a horse, so I am doing all right.

**D.J. Pratt,  
4 Victoria Crescent,  
MONT ALBERT 3127.**

## Dear People,

I am only just an 'arthritic' and am as yet, more interested in prevention than cure. I wonder if anyone could write an article for the magazine about prevention and possible aid with prevention through diet.

**Peggy Parrish,  
C/- Post Office,  
MORUYA 2537.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

I would like to reply to John Horsburgh G.R. 30. It is just not possible to generalise about horses as so much depends on their type, their circumstances and their environment. I thought that Irene Maxwell's article did a splendid job in pointing out that there is much more to keeping horses healthy and happy than just a paddock of grass. Many horses, in this area at least, will not thrive on just grazing, no matter how good it is. Careful observation of each horse and as much knowledge as you can acquire are two essentials for a horse keeper.

I love Lolo Houbien's accounts of Middle Hill. What on earth are 'Womin'? I thought it was a misprint at first!

**Clare and Steve Stevenson,  
P.S. 1276,  
EUMUNDI 4562.**



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

**Dear Readers,**

At Christmas time I went to see my Norwegian girlfriend in Adelaide and she took me to the St. Lucia Festival held just before Christmas. We sang from hymn books decorated with pictures of mountains and log cabins, with the hymns in four Scandinavian languages. It was all very moving but the most beautiful part was when Silent Night was sung in five languages all at the same time. At the end of the service St. Lucia proceeded around the church with lighted candles in her hair followed by similarly dressed attendants and then we followed into the hall for a scrumptious tea of coffee and Scandinavian cakes served on traditionally worked tablecloths. While we ate, a girl played folk songs on the hardanger fiddle and then the Christmas tree was brought out and we danced around it. The tree was dressed with the flags of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the small heart shaped baskets woven from coloured papers. I was so thrilled to be a part of it all and my friend is coming over to Melbourne sometime in May as the Scandinavian Lutheran church in Toorak will be celebrating Norway's National Day and similar events happen then.

My girlfriend's name is Arlis Olsen and she lives at 35 Airline Avenue, Prospect 5082, phone 269-1669. If anyone wants to see her and talk about Norway or God she would welcome them.

**Ffranses Ingram,  
35 Denman Avenue,  
GLEN IRIS 3146.**

**Dear G.R.,**

Can anyone tell me about lime pectin? I have heard it can be used in place of sugar while making jams – is this true? Hope someone can advise.

**Carole, John, Lia & Aaron Furlow,  
Hilditch Avenue,  
EAST WARBURTON 3799.**

**Dear Readers,**

A topic on which I would like information is the use of guinea pigs as a source of animal protein. I can imagine the screams of anguish and/or revulsion, but they seem to be extremely efficient converters of grass to protein and rabbit keeping is illegal in Queensland.

I think guinea pigs, rabbits, pigeons and guinea fowl are ideal for self-sufficient non-vegetarians as they can be fed at absolutely minimal cost on any area and can be killed as required. Cattle, goats and sheep are too big to be used quickly and therefore need the expense of deep freezing while poultry seem to need expensively bought food.

Many thanks for a constant supply of interest and inspiration.

**Kim Christle,  
Mapleton Falls Farm,  
M.S. 956,  
MAPLETON 4560.**

**Dear Grass Roots Folk,**

There was a letter querying Piperonyl in G.R. 30, from Bev Povah. It is an insecticide which breaks down in about one day (similar to pyrethrin). I have a handy booklet *Pesticides and Alternatives*, produced by the Brisbane Organic Growers' Group and printed by Vibro Press, 157 Ann Street, Brisbane. It gives information about strengths, characteristics, persistence and ecology rating of all known insecticides, herbicides and fungicides, together with alternative hints.

Marly Wright, about your coffee beans. I'm afraid the Victorian climate is against coffee growing. Coffee plantations thrive in sub-tropical upland districts i.e. hot days and cold nights all year round. I believe the soil requirements must also be exacting as there are no successful plantations in Australia. Coffee trees also need tall shade trees. Incidentally we spent some years in the New Guinea highlands where coffee grows well. We have planted one tree here on the outskirts of Brisbane but are not very hopeful.

**Lesley Bonnefin,  
33 Solomon Avenue,  
LOGANHOLME 4129.**

**Dear Folks,**

Could someone tell me how to dry apples?



**Juliett Cross,  
C/- Upper Sturt Road,  
UPPER STURT 5156.**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

A reader mentioned Bach-Flower Rescue Remedy for animals affected by ticks. I must admit my ignorance about this. It would be really great to have something better than the tick serum which is expensive and is available only from the vet. As my animals become ill mostly at weekends or during the night when the vet is not available, I have often wished to have some serum at home for emergencies. How wonderful if this Bach Flower Remedy would act as well as the serum.

I tried Pat Coleby's hint of copper-sulphur bath for footrot – it really works. The goats now have a copper-mineral lick to prevent further outbreaks.

Last August we lost a beautiful Jersey cow due to lantana poisoning. The vet treated her for infection with antibiotics! It was only when a week later a second cow displayed the same symptoms that we realised what had happened. I injected her with antihistamine and she recovered quickly. The point I am trying to make is that natural remedies and conventional medicine can be combined to successfully treat ailments – it's no use to get fanatical about one or the other.

**Elke Huber,  
JULATTEN 4880.**

**Dear Folks,**

How many times have you heard it said, 'We can send a man to the moon but science has no answer to the common cold.'? Well there is an answer to the common cold. Science could not duplicate this miracle herb. This so called weed was here on earth all the time.

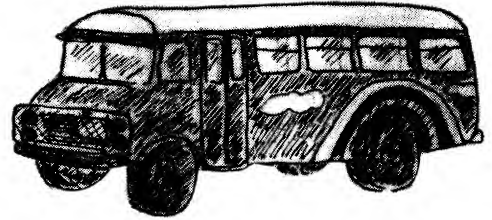
A doctor who wrote an article on kelp in *Prevention* magazine said, 'To prevent a cold, eat kelp every day of your life!' Well time has allowed me to forget the miseries of the cold as it was nearly four years ago when my nose was running and I decided to give it a go. My eight year old son doesn't know what it's like to have a cold either, and being a sufferer of asthma he takes kelp tablets each morning and night.

How can kelp prevent a cold you ask? Simple. Our bodies normally should be free from all colds and many experts agree that if we arm ourselves with the right weapons, our naturally occurring army of fighters inside will win the battle for us. I believe colds come to us through deficiencies. We are fed mostly crops grown on deficient soil not to mention junk food, so naturally our bodies become gradually lacking in the essential fighting weapons needed to combat the common cold. Over millions of years the ocean has become a giant mixing pot of minerals and elements washed and leached from a once fertile earth. Man will one day farm the oceans to the extent that he now farms the land. The Japanese like the Irish and many other nations have farmed the ocean in search of kelp for centuries. In Japan today, kelp is the major source of protein and is also used to replace the blood plasma so much in demand. That's how close to blood kelp is! Kelp contains 13 vitamins, 20 essential amino acids (protein) and over 100 elements. What else do we need say about it? Kelp takes about twelve weeks to work in adults because this foreign food is new to our intestinal flora, but children who have many species of intestinal flora still with them, can make use of kelp's wonderful properties well before we can. Kelp breaks down the deposits that clog our arterial walls. In Hawaii, where kelp is eaten like the great Australian meat pie, the incidence of heart attack (even though the natives are generally over-weight) is virtually unknown. The use of kelp in your diet is essential each day in my opinion, and after almost a cold free four years my dessert isn't about to change. What about yours because the proof of the pudding is in the eating?

**Alan 'Casuarina',  
P.O. Box 340,  
YEPPON 4703.**

# GIPSY TOURING

By Nancy & Dashley Graham, Tas.



I have always dreamed of being a gypsy. My vision included a rustic wagon moving leisurely through the countryside and the endless excitement of new towns and acquaintances.

In June, 1979, our family of five boarded the Empress of Australia from Tasmania and began to live out this fantasy around the Australian continent. We had a 1967 school bus which we had converted for our gypsy wagon. Job resigned, savings withdrawn, correspondence texts in hand, we waved enthusiastically from the railing that day, but inwardly I wondered what madness had overcome us to undertake such a venture.

We were anxious to test the bus so headed up the east coast first where parts and assistance would be readily available. The brightly painted exterior symbolised our overall optimism and our vehicle was dubbed the 'Rainbow Bus'.

The bus ran well and we soon settled into a comfortable routine. The eldest children, Deron (13) and Heather (9) were given certain daily responsibilities such as fetching water, bed making, dish washing and keeping a diary. Our youngest, Holly (4), was easily entertained with so much company on hand. No longer did dad, sister and brother disappear each morning. We travelled only a few hours a day and seldom drove at night, which helped to keep the children from becoming too restless. An unrushed departure and early camp allowed us to establish smooth progress and with it a sense of security. Interdependence began to characterise our nomadic lifestyle, despite the fact we sacrificed privacy and sometimes dignity in such close quarters!

While my husband, Dashley, was busy handling the bus driving chores, I divided my time between navigating, playing social director to the children and balancing the budget. I realised with horror I was spending four times as much on food per week as I would have been at home with our own vegie garden and bulk buying. Obviously, the gypsy life involved more responsibility than I had imagined!

Canberra, one of our first big stops, will long be remembered for the freezing night spent at the drive-in movie. We huddled around the heaters provided from the adjoining speaker stands, popping our own popcorn and scraping frost off the windscreen in order to see!

It was our good fortune to be hosted by pedal power friends who sold us the idea of pushbike riding as a family. With their help we were able to locate two more used bikes

along with a special seat for Holly that mounted ingeniously on the crossbar of Dashley's bike. With a little teamwork it became a simple chore to have all bikes pulled down from their respective racks and the whole clan zooming off in less than five minutes. This healthy, free, family activity soon became one of the highlights of our trip and we enjoyed bike outings around every major Australian city, as well as a hundred smaller towns and parks in between.

Travelling north, we soon left the cooler regions around the Snowy Mountains behind and were welcomed by new friends in a western Sydney suburb. A train sped us into the city centre and we spent an exhausting day trekking around town. The crushing sensation of endless crowds made a far greater impact than Sydney's well known attractions and we happily retreated that night to the Rainbow Bus. 'A nice place to visit but . . . !' With a sigh of relief, the country lovers left the 'big city', but not until we made the turn-off onto the New England Highway at Newcastle did we really begin to relax.

The bus proved a cozy haven on rainy days in the New England National Park while we sipped hot chocolate and tried to catch up on homework and letters. Later we journeyed down towards the coast and finished off the week with three days as guests of the Homeland commune



Nancy hanging out clothes near a quiet beach at Yeppon, Queensland. Note the tide line.

where we helped plant strawberries before continuing on to Coffs Harbour. A three day stay at a local health farm convinced us to go vegetarian. I won't say Dashley and the children balked at this, but it did not surprise me to hear a chorus of, 'Oh, no, not cat food again,' at dinner time! Still, we persisted, and felt reinforced when we noted prevailing meat prices and quality. I was also relieved not to have to worry about keeping meat fresh in climates where water out of the cold tap was nearly hot enough to brew tea!

Lush, sub-tropical country ushered us into Brisbane and the city offered us a hilly bike tour, short river cruise and the worst tasting water on the entire trip!

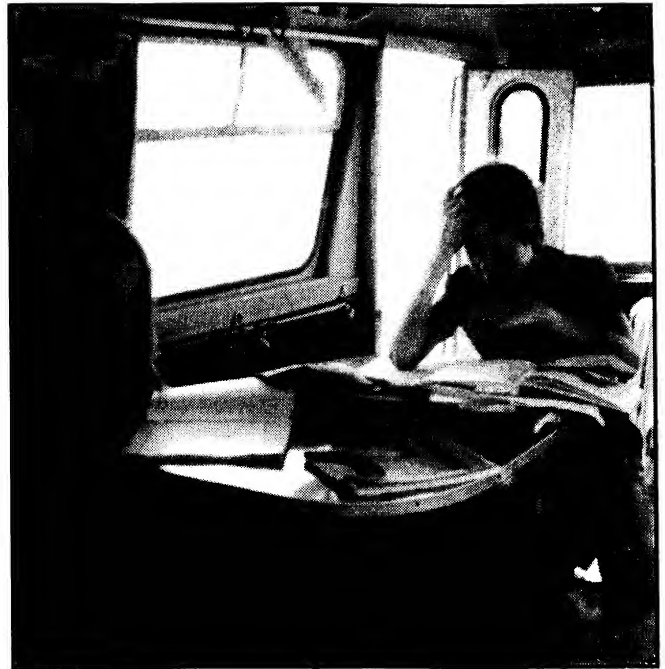
Being fairly self-contained, we were able to avoid caravan parks and camped in some unusual places including under two lighthouses and a city centre. We had taken far too many clothes, necessitated by visiting five distinctly different climatic regions. We often laundered our clothes in rivers and hung them out to dry on a handy tree.

Each day now became an example of 'Life, Be In It', as we hiked through caves, climbed up to monuments like the Singing Ship near Yeppon, Qld. (shakily), explored islands and exhausted an endless stream of adventure playgrounds. With fewer distractions, we found the simplest things gave us pleasure and a scrap of rope found on the beach could bring hours of fun.

One day in distant North Queensland, we thought we had at last found the perfect secluded beach. However, an impulsive early morning 'skinny dip' found us suddenly surrounded by keen holidaymakers who rushed upon the scene to launch boats, cast nets, fish and picnic for the day. There we were, submerged to our necks huddling together attempting to look casual, while our children looked on in amusement from the bus! Finally, an embarrassed Heather dashed to the shore and cast in our bathers and we emerged into respectability.

With the wet season approaching, we were forced to depart from the coastal paradise to the great, dreaded, interior outback. Bumping along our first dirt road on the way to the Gulf of Carpentaria, we faced our first breakdown. A broken tie-rod caused us to lose our steering and we lurched off the road into a ditch. We thanked our guardian angel that the bus had not rolled and after Dashley's expert bush 'mechanicking', we were mobile and heading south the next morning.

We arrived in lively Mt. Isa just in time to take in the annual rodeo. The still, cold, star-filled nights we encountered camping near here reminded us surprisingly of our native Alaska! We began to experience more demanding conditions in the outback after leaving 'The Isa'. As the temperatures rose, so did our tempers. Day after day of burning heat, sticky flies and tedium followed. Just when we thought we could not take it any more, an oasis in the form of a river (including an occasional crocodile) or hot springs would appear. Body and spirit revived, on we ventured. In this fashion we advanced



Deron (13) and Heather (9) working on their correspondence lessons

north to a rebuilt, but mossie-plagued Darwin before retracing our steps to Katherine and heading west again.

Only fifteen kilometres from Fitzroy Crossing in Western Australia on a corrugated dirt road, our reserve petrol tank shook loose, gouged into the road, shot the bus two feet into the air and pierced the floor before ending up a pitiful holey heap in the dust. We rushed for ice-cream containers and saved just enough petrol to coast us into the next roadhouse. Phew!!

The waters of the Indian Ocean were really turquoise and what a welcome sight! The bus had taken a beating and was repaired while we scoured the beach of Broome for oysters and mud crabs during a low king tide.

Famous Eighty Mile Beach was a bright spot in the middle of our remaining two days of dirt roads. We braved the stonefish and sea snakes to reel in two fifteen pound sharks and gathered the best shells of our collection. The next day it took us five hours to travel 140 kilometres on the worst dirt road we had seen.

The hugeness of Western Australia contained the highest and lowest moments on our journey. Our moods varied from grim determination in order to overcome the 'tyranny of distance' in the top end, to sheer joy from having our faces swept with thirst quenching rain along the cooler rocky Southwest Cape. Magnificent Kings Park, Perth's 150th birthday celebrations and a blaze of wildflowers in bloom, earned it the title of 'our favourite mainland city'. Turning east at last, we lingered and savoured the dramatic beauty of southwest Western Australia before tackling our final desert odyssey.

The notorious Nullabor Plain yielded more beauty than trauma. Surprising greenness from recent rainfall, stunning cliff-top views of The Bight, and four lively



Aboriginal hitchhikers put us in a good frame of mind to enjoy all the quiet beaches gracing the Eyre Peninsula. With 85 per cent of our trek completed, fair weather and a healthy bus, we found time to sample wines in the lush Barossa Valley and take in Adelaide's Marineland. A three minute ferry trip crossed us over the Murray River for the second time and like 'the horse bolting for the barn', we all felt the draw towards home as we approached Melbourne. We returned to our mainland launching point feeling triumphant but road weary, and longing to be home planting our spring garden and tending farm and animals.

*Five and a half months.*

*Eighteen thousand kilometres.*

*Three time changes.*

*Four oceans.*

*Five climates — all behind us now.*

As we stood at the railing of the Empress watching the lights of Melbourne slip away, our minds filled with mixed emotions — happiness for completing our epic journey, gratitude to our many kind hosts and sadness for roads untravelled. 'Oh well, *next time*', Dashley keeps saying. Me? I just say, 'Goodbye, gypsy life — once is enough!!!'



Dashley and Deron working on a broken tie-rod near the Gulf of Carpentaria.

## GROWING GINGER

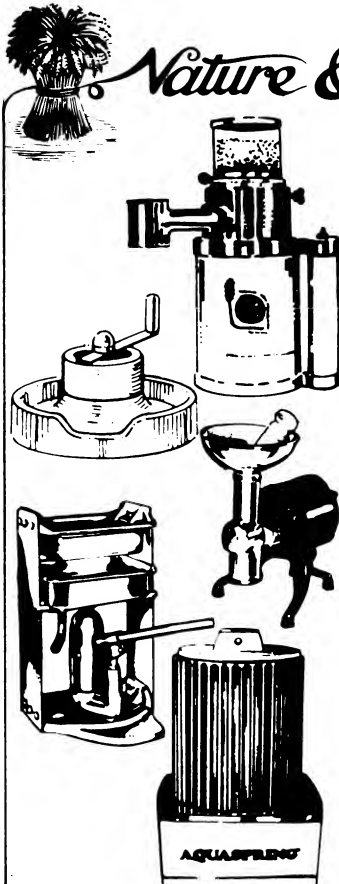
Ginger is the dried underground stem of a plant which grows wild in South East Asia and is extensively cultivated in most tropical countries. Ginger needs the richest and best of soils. It will not thrive in sands, clay or dry soil. A rich vegetable loam is suitable, but must be well drained, or the rhizomes (underground stems) will rot. Generally speaking, ginger can be grown wherever tomatoes are grown out-doors and preferably on land with a northerly aspect and sheltered from winds.

Propagation is entirely by pieces of the rhizomes being planted directly into the growing bed. Cut the rhizomes into pieces, taking care to leave at least one bud on each cutting. Plant each piece shallowly so that it is barely covered with soil.

Best results are obtained by raising the soil in ridges, partially filling the hollows with well rotted manure and planting the cuttings in the hollows. Trenches should be about 18 in apart, with the cuttings 12 in apart. Where possible, a thick layer of leaves or grass should be used to keep the planted cuttings cool and moist. It is important to keep the bed as weed-free as possible.

As ginger is very much a soil exhausting crop it responds well to animal manures or artificial fertilisers.

If the cuttings are set in September or October, the plants will flower about March. After flowering, the shoots will wither, the stems start to turn yellow while the rhizomes will increase in weight and size. However, if you wish to preserve the ginger, the rhizomes are dug before the plant begins to wither i.e. while the plants are still green.



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# Making a Bridle

By Kevin & Cheryl Binsted, Mingela, Qld.

The materials you will need are as follows:

- One strap 19 in long  $\frac{3}{4}$  in wide (headband)
- One strap 18 in long  $\frac{3}{4}$  in wide (browband)
- Two straps 33 in long  $\frac{3}{4}$  in wide (cheek straps)
- One strap 14 in long  $\frac{1}{2}$  in wide (throat strap)
- One strap 20 in long  $\frac{1}{2}$  in wide (throat strap)
- Two  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in rings preferably brass
- Two  $\frac{3}{4}$  in buckles preferably brass
- One  $\frac{1}{2}$  in buckle
- Waxed thread
- One bit, usually a snaffle bit

All straps should be edged with the edging tool. It makes a neater finish and does not damage the horse as squared edges would.

The headband and browband should have both ends bevelled for approx.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. Use a knife (it makes for easier stitching on one end and the opposite end sits flatly against the cheekstrap when completed). Bevel other straps on one end only, approx. 2 in. Wrap ends to be folded and stitched in wet cloth so leather is pliable.

Diagram 1.

Stitch rings to each end of headband and browband, using  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in turnings. Stitch buckles on cheekstraps, using 2 in turnings. Taper other ends and cut point off. Punch holes 1 in apart for approx. 10 in to 14 in depending on size of horse. Stitch throat straps to rings also, using 2 in turnings. Stitch  $\frac{1}{2}$  in buckle to end of longer strap, using 2 in turnings. Punch holes in short strap 1 in apart, after tapering end like cheekstraps.

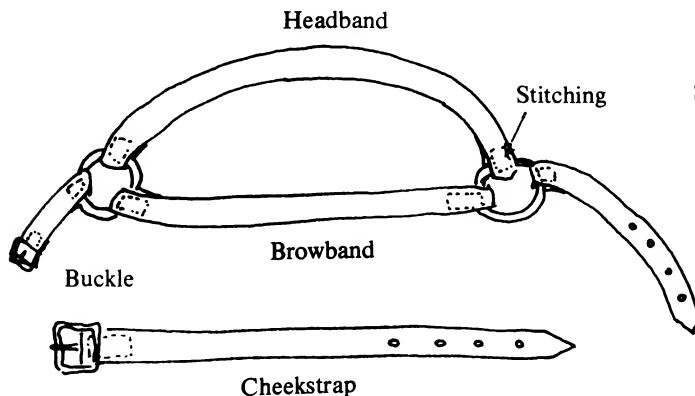
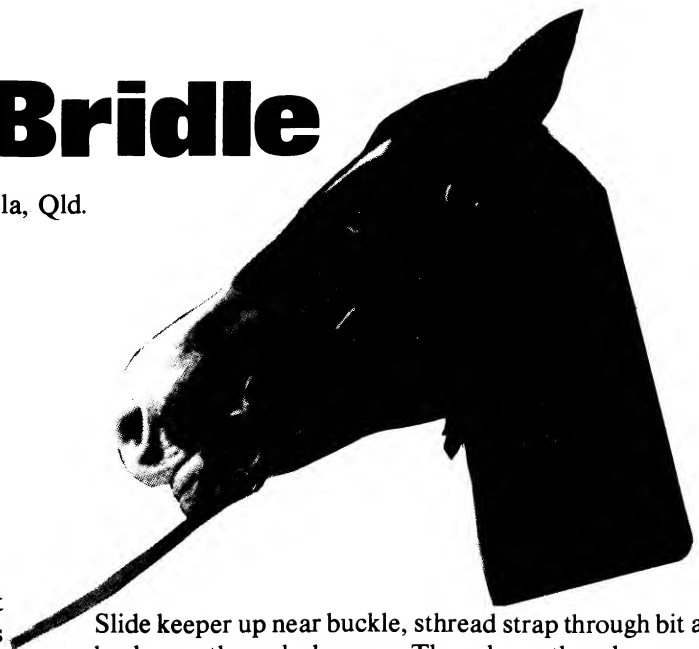
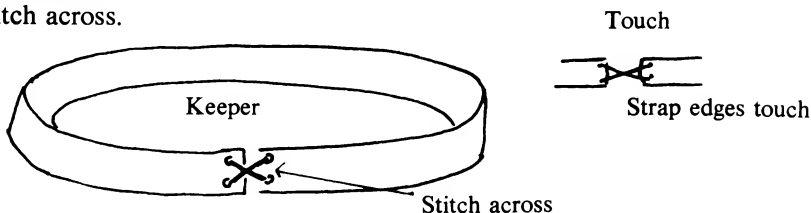


Diagram 2.

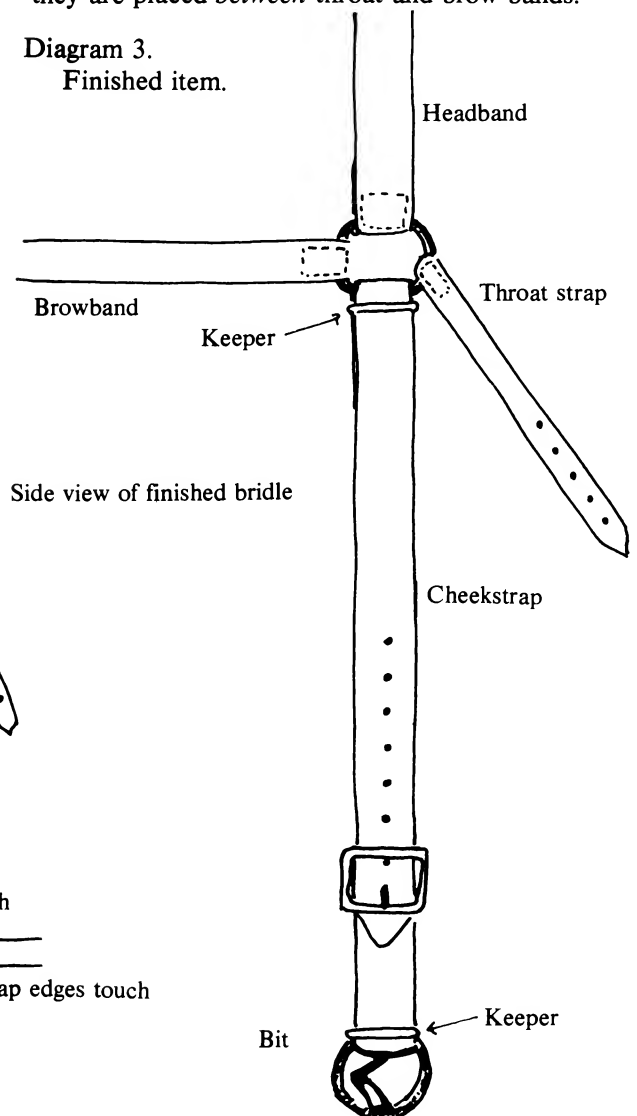
Make four keepers approx.  $3\frac{1}{4}$  in long and  $\frac{3}{8}$  in wide. Stitch across.



Slide keeper up near buckle, sthread strap through bit and back up through keeper. Thread another keeper on cheekstrap, through ring on headband and browband, back down through keeper again and buckle up. Adjust to desired length. Repeat for other cheekstrap. Make sure they are placed *between* throat and brow bands.

Diagram 3.

Finished item.



# SCRAPS CAN BE BEAUTIFUL

By Nola Bindon, E. Fremantle, W.A.

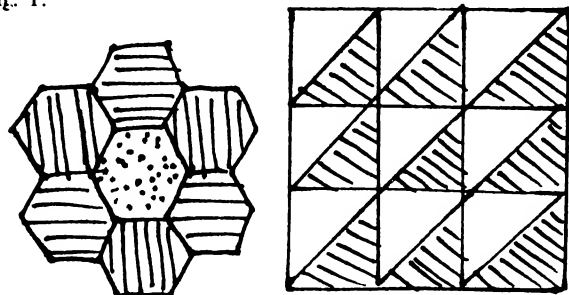
Patchwork quilting is yet another traditional art which Grass Roots readers can put to practical use in their bid to survive with dignity. Your old clothes, curtains, etc. can be recycled into attractive and useful articles for the house or for wearing. Many opportunity shops have suitable garments for cutting up (costing very little) and some even have scrap fabric boxes. Ask relatives and friends who sew to save all their scraps and look for cheap remnants in shops if you are really splurging. Floral patterned cottons are suitable but avoid stretch fabric, sheers and seersucker.

Make patchwork quilting a sociable family craft for evenings or wet days by including your man and children in the project. My husband's colour sense and design skills are very handy! You might invite a group of friends for 'quilting bees' to work together on friendship quilts for each other, as pioneer women did in North American frontier times. One lady quilter I know made a beautiful quilt to mark her wedding anniversary, with likenesses of their children appliqued into the design as well as outlines of all the houses she had lived in during her married life — a sort of family album in fabric.

Not only bed quilts, but removable doona covers, cushion covers, cot covers, sleeping bags and warm garments such as jackets, kiddy crawlers and so on can be made — insulate the body and save on fuel! Start with something small though, such as a potholder which is great as a gift.

There are two basic methods of 'piecing' your patchwork — English style, with lots of small regular pieces basted over paper patterns and hand stitched together and American style which is usually geometric shapes pieced together without patterns. This style is suitable for hand or machine sewing if you have a machine and wish to save time. A little basic sewing knowledge is required for either method.

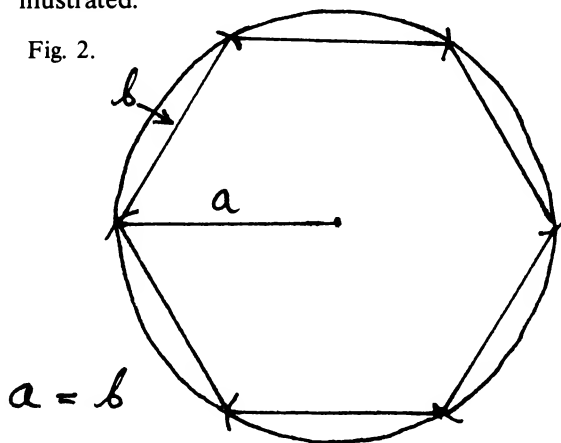
Fig. 1.



Your design is a very personal thing and a way to express yourself in your surroundings — you can go wild with bright colours or choose more low key tones to suit your mood. Choose fabric to suit the purpose, keeping in mind the amount of wear and tear and washing which will be required. Corduroy, leather, denim or men's tweedy suiting can all be used for hard wearing articles. A golden rule is to use fabric of uniform weight and type for each project. Wash cotton, calico and other similar materials which may have 'dressing' or dyes that could run after an article is finished.

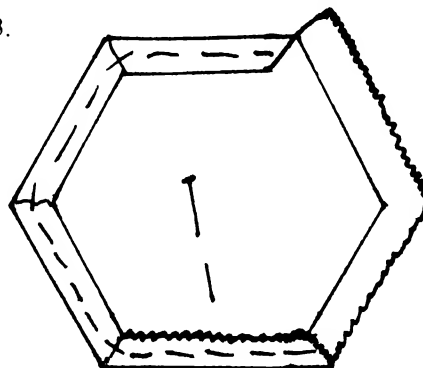
The hexagon is a popular and easy shape for beginners. Draw yourself a thick cardboard template as illustrated.

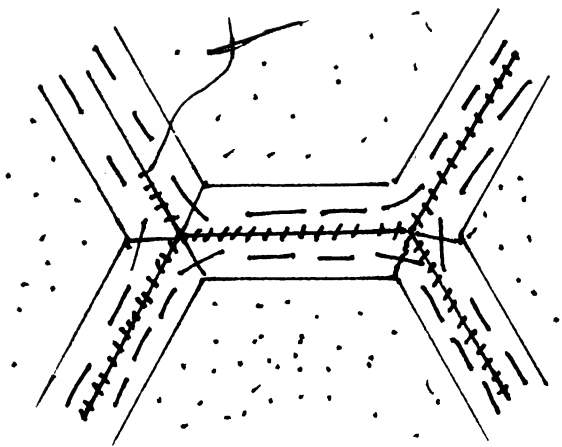
Fig. 2.



Plastic and metal templates are available in shops but these restrict your size. Use the template to draw thin cardboard patterns (use old envelopes, birthday cards, etc.), being very precise about measuring and cutting, then pin each pattern to wrong side of cloth and cut out leaving 1 cm seam allowance. Turn over and baste the seam allowance all round, then top sew pieces as shown.

Fig. 3.



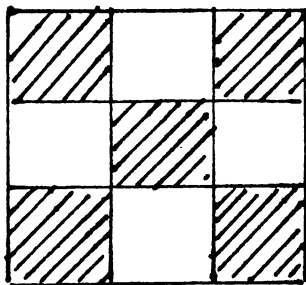


I joined a couple of hundred hexagons at random (all scrap material) to make a top for a single bed quilt, bordered it with plain fabric and it looks great.

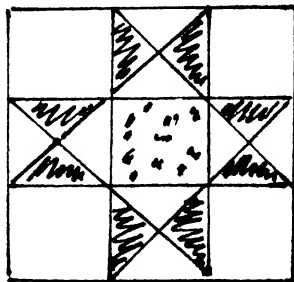
The popular 'checkerboard' and 'star' designs are traditional American ones using easy piecing, sewn using machine or fine hand stitches and 'running stitch'. Careful measurement, leaving 1 cm seam allowance when cutting and cutting with the grain ensure exact corners and a neat product.

Fig. 4.

Checkerboard



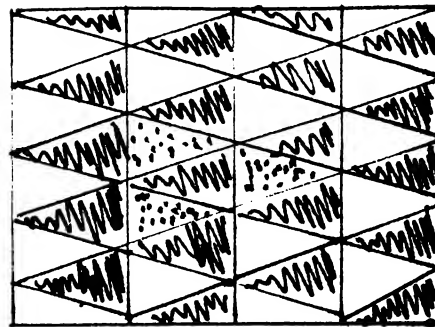
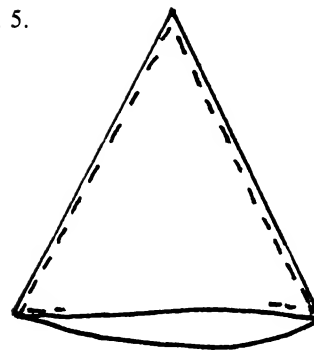
Variable Star



Quilting itself is the fine running stitching used to connect the 'top' i.e. the pieced part of the article, with its backing fabric and whatever filling is used, as well as to decorate and enhance the design. Quilting can be tedious, but the amount you do is up to you and it can be done on a machine for functional articles. Work from centre to edge of work using a washable pen to draw on the design if you wish, or just follow the outline of your piecing. Since the work must be held firmly while you stitch, an embroidery hoop or wooden frame is a great help. Quilting puffs up and accentuates your design by the shadow it creates.

Puffy quilts for warmth can be made with square or triangular pieces, backed, then individually stuffed with dacron wadding — really lots of little bags, stitched together.

Fig. 5.



Light bedcovers or jackets can be filled with a thin layer of dacron batting or wadding, available by the metre in fabric shops. In pioneer days country women sometimes used wool packs as the 'filler', covering these with colourful cloth. They were called 'Waggas' and were obviously valuable for their durability, not their lightness or washability.

A wide range of books is now available to give you ideas. I use these two quite a lot.

*Creative Patchwork*, a Golden Hands book, publisher Marshall Cavendish, London.

*The Perfect Patchwork Primer* by Beth Gutcheon, publisher Penguin Books, England.

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# RABBITS

By Rees Machen.

Well, first of all I guess you think, why rabbits?

We already had sheep, pigs, chooks and ducks, so in a way it was a natural progression. The economics of utilising meat, skins and manure in the form of backyard livestock interested us and last, but not least, we all love to eat rabbit.

The breed of rabbit we use is largely a matter of luck as it has been illegal in Tasmania for so long that no pure meat breeds are available. We are breeding up our own strain similar to the New Zealand White (or black) based on size, growth rate, mothering ability and fecundity. We have been quite successful using common pet rabbits (generally short haired whites) as our foundation does, culling extensively and only keeping breeders from the better does.

We use two types of cages — intensive and reasonably extensive. The intensive system is in the form of a three tiered nursery cage, each section being about 1.25 m long, 0.75 m deep and 0.5 m high. It is made of wood except for the front of aviary wire with a Weldmesh door and a Weldmesh insert in one corner of the floor for a toilet, which the rabbits use quite readily. The toilets are situated above each other with a catch tray for manure under the bottom section for easy cleaning and removal to the garden. (Rabbit manure may be used green as it will not burn plants). A Weldmesh hay rack is fastened to the front of the cage within easy reach of the door and water is always available from an inverted bottle with a plastic pipe extended into the cage.

The extensive system is for dry does, weaned litters and bucks. We have double cages with raised shelter boxes made from wire, on a wooden framework. These cages are moved daily on grass or specially sown fodder crops.

Our rabbits are well fed, but as they are kept for only twelve weeks or so, it isn't expensive. Apart from what they graze each day, they are fed the following:

Lactating does:  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup bread and milk  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup barley  
greens  
cod liver oil and vitamin drops once a week.

Weaned young: barley or poultry pellets to appetite  
greens to appetite  
bread and milk every second day.

Bucks & dry does  $\frac{1}{2}$  bucket greens  
barley twice a week.



This is fed in two divided feeds per day i.e. the greens are fed twice but the whole ration of barley or bread and milk is fed at one time. Water is always available and is particularly important for does close to kindling time as they will eat their young if they do not get sufficient water. Some greens that are suitable include: all grasses, thistles (particularly milk thistles), carrots, silver beet, red beet, pea trash, berry fruit leaves (raspberry leaves are always given the day before kindling), most fruit prunings, most fruits, swede, cabbage, lettuce and so on.

When the does have two weeks to go in their 31 day gestation period, they are moved to the nursery cage and given hay and a nest box made out of wood — a cut down fruit box is fine. Within a week of kindling the pregnant doe picks up hay in their mouths and make a soft nest which they line with hair pulled from the chest and belly when the time is near. Rabbits must be left completely alone while kindling and the nest undisturbed for two to three weeks or the doe may eat her young. Does are immaculate in their cleaning and the only sign may be a little blood around the toilet area. They spend very little time with their young, feeding for short periods only a few times a day. If they are disturbed while feeding, does will jump out of the nest box with young still clinging to the nipples and if a baby falls out of the nest, the doe will make no attempt to replace it and it will quickly die if hot or cold or wet.

At about ten days the bunnies start to get lively and their eyes open. (You can safely peek from now on, but still don't disturb the nest). At two to three weeks they begin to emerge from the nest and experiment with dry food. From this stage on they can consume incredible amounts so it is important to feed to appetite, which can be quite voracious.

We re-mate the doe when the young are four weeks old and move them all to an extensive cage. The young are weaned at around six weeks by returning the mother to the nursery cage where she will kindle again in two more weeks. This cycle of course cannot go on forever and we rest the does all winter and re-mate only if the does are in good body condition. With this system we are averaging

litters of from six to eight with our main losses due to:

- a) cats
- b) wet weather
- c) my own impatience to see the young and disturbing the nest.

Rabbits are extremely susceptible to wet and cold and the young die in hours if the nest is even slightly damp so weather-proof nursery cages or a nursery set-up in a shed is the answer. We have had no trouble with disease in over two years but we do have an isolation box if any rabbit appears off colour.

When the young are 8 to 14 weeks old, of 1.5 kg minimum live weight, we kill all but the does we are intending to keep as breeders. The rabbits are not fed for 24 hours prior to killing. They are hypnotised by repeated firm stroking over the face, eyes and ears (in one motion) then killed by dislocation of the vertebrae and rupture of the spinal column. This is painless and non-traumatic if done quickly and efficiently. They are then skinned — the skins being tanned by the readily available Leidreiter's kit. The rabbits are then cleaned and frozen ready for our eager buyers.

I highly recommend rabbit keeping as a pleasant, interesting and rewarding way of supplying your own meat and saleable produce both in meat and skins.

Best reading material:

*The Right Way To Keep Rabbits*, by Roy Robinson.  
Elliot Right Way Books. Kingswood, Surrey U.K.  
*Raising Rabbits The Modern Way* by Bob Bennet.  
Garden Way Publishing. Charlotte, Vermont, U.S.A.

I will be happy to answer any queries if readers would like to write to me care of G.R.

### BURNT SAUCEPAN

To clean off burnt food, cover the base of the pan with water and add a small chopped onion, bring to the boil and boil for about 10 minutes. The food will then clean off easily.

## Organic Growing

*is a quarterly magazine about growing, storing and preparing food the natural way*

Each issue is crammed with practical articles on organic farming, gardening, livestock and related subjects — all written in Australia for temperate Australian conditions.

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### ORGANIC GROWING

(formerly The Organic Gardener and Farmer)

## HOW TO SAVE VITAMINS

It is far easier to prevent vitamin deficiencies occurring than it is to correct them. A little care and commonsense in the kitchen can help prevent vitamin losses.

1. Use all fruits and vegetables as soon as possible after picking. If storing these choose a cool, dark place.
2. When cooking exclude as much oxygen as possible. Heat vegetables quickly and do not lift the lid more than necessary. The longer vegetables are cooked, the greater generally is the nutritional loss.
3. Do not use salt or soda when cooking. These practices can cause loss of moisture and destruction of vitamins.
4. Peel fruit only when they have been contaminated with chemical sprays or when the skin is thick, unpalatable or unable to be cleaned.
5. Use as little water as possible in cooking. Excess water leaches out water soluble vitamins and mineral salts.
6. Do not soak fruit and vegetables in water for the same reason as 5.
7. Any water used in cooking should be saved and added to soups and gravies, etc. this contains many minerals.
8. Shred or chop sufficient foods only for immediate use. Shredding exposes the flesh to air, hastening oxidation which destroys vitamins.
9. Do not store fresh fruit juices but use them as soon as possible after they have been extracted. Juicing is like shredding and exposes vitamins to oxidation.
10. Avoid alcoholic drinks and drinks containing caffeine e.g. coffee. These destroy several B group vitamins.
11. Use stainless steel, enamel, glass or earthenware utensils for preparing and serving food. These utensils are not affected by alkalis or acids and do not react with essential mineral salts contained in many fruits and vegetables.

From *Natures Incredible Foods*  
by Vitaplex.

### WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

- \* SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN THE HOME GARDEN  
Sept. 25th and 26th
- \* STARTING A NATIVE BUSH GARDEN  
October 30th and 31st
- \* BUILD A BACKYARD PLAYGROUND  
November 21st

Information:  
**Australian Horticultural  
Correspondence School,  
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LILYDALE 3140.**



Note: Visit us. We are open all day every Saturday.

GOING SOLAR,  
320 Victoria Street,  
NORTH MELBOURNE 3051  
(03) 328 4123

Dear Readers,

We are pleased to announce that Going Solar is now in its fifth year of trading. We've now settled into the new shop in North Melbourne - I say "new", because even though we've been here more than twelve months, some people are still going to the old address (320 Victoria St. is between Peel & Capel Streets, just near the Victoria Market). Our plant nursery out the back is well established, and even though we have a wide range of plants, they fit into the small space available.

To the right, is our new symbol. It represents our commitment to environmentally sound, quality products. Further, our policy has always been to stock those goods that are not readily available elsewhere. Below, some of those products are listed. You are welcome to browse through the shop or take advantage of our mail order service (send three stamps for a catalogue). If you need more help, we have a free customer advisory and recommendation service.

Yours sincerely,

STEPHEN INGROUILLE



# Going Solar

ENERGY AGRICULTURE SELF SUFFICIENCY

## AGRICULTURE

BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT;  
(SAFE) PLANT FOODS;  
NATURAL PEST CONTROL;  
VEGETABLE SEEDS:

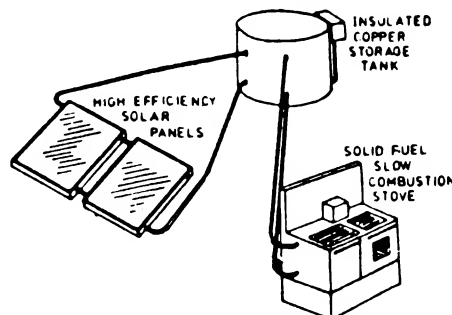
'New Gippsland' &  
'Thompson & Morgan';  
HERB SEEDS: A range  
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permaculture plants;  
TOOLS: Unusual tools  
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## SHELTER

INSULATION: Alpinite  
safe, natural eelgrass.  
MUD BRICKS: Stainless  
steel tapered moulds.  
Dalrac Presses.

# PLASTIC WATER TANKS

By Dewdrop

This is a chronicle of how a group of people at Wyaliba, near Glen Innes, sought to store water pumped from the river.

First we hand dug two 1500 gallon holes and lined them with cement. They worked well but were not enough for one hundred fruit trees, a big garden and some neighbours who were tired of carrying buckets.

The next stage was three holes dug by a 360 degree swing, one cubic yard bucket backhoe on caterpillar tracks, whose owner charged \$45 per hour and \$2 per mile to and from our place. Each hole was planned to hold 10,000 gallons. They were rectangular, five feet deep, with sides sloping one-in-one to avoid earth slip. The earth here is clay down to two feet, then soft rock. Each hole took an hour and the backhoe was going all the time. Then we wheelbarrowed the mullock dug out of the holes to build the sides up a bit more and left an erosion proof spillway.

On one tank we tried b ntonite, which is sometimes used to seal earth dams, mixed in with the loose earth on the inside. Sad to relate, it leaked about a thousand gallons a day. On another tank we used \$70 worth of six metre wide black plastic with an underlining of old carpet, underfelt and hessian bags to stop stones poking through it. The plastic had to be cut to fit so we sealed any joints with Hydroseal which gums it up immediately. That part needed nice still air and plenty of rocks and blocks of wood to hold the edges down. If a mischievous wind blows up half-way through, the whole sheet can start billowing up and down, no matter how plaintively you address it.



Our pink lined water storage tank nestling romantically amongst the bushland and mountains of Wyaliba.



As soon as we could, we started pumping water into it and shovelling topsoil back up the outer banks and onto the edges of the plastic. Oh! To see it on a misty morning with the reflection of the mountains on the water and the light glinting shyly on the sombre black plastic — a beautiful work of art. But, sad to relate, the sun loves black plastic and after two months, the plastic started deteriorating badly where exposed.

The other tank we lined by the same process using pink plastic — a bit incongruous in the Australian landscape but it has lasted over six months. As the plastic lasts well out of the sun we are now out scrounging for more underfelt.

The rest of the story is more cheerful. We have benefitted by having water storage at less than two cents a gallon with relatively little labour. The earth banks have had time to settle and we are planning on lining all the tanks with cement.

Each of the fifteen or so adults using the water supply pays three dollars a week. Twenty per cent of this goes to feed and maintain the diesel pump. The rest goes towards pipes, tank sealing, maybe a hydraulic ram pump, a long pipeline from a high mountain stream and filters.

The pink tank has attracted water beetles, the water beetles have attracted some frogs and the frogs have attracted a big healthy looking black snake. I hope he appreciates all we have done for him.



# KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES

*In Grass Roots No. 28 Sean Adams requested an article on 'How to Make Your Kero Fridge Run Smoothly'.*

*Several of our regular readers have generously contributed their experiences in this issue.*

## KERO FRIDGES REMEMBERED

By Bob Willis, Wynnum, Qld.

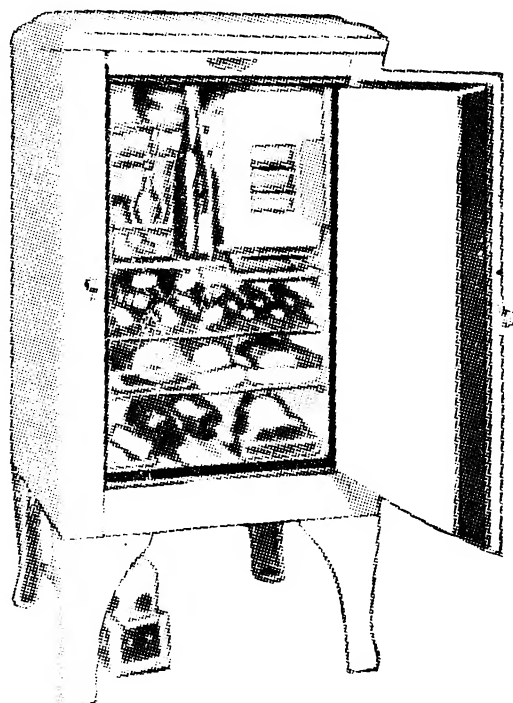
Ah! Sigh! The Prefect, the Charles Hope, the Arctic Fox, the (wait for it) Icy Ball! Comfortable yellow and green enamelled devices that sat in the corner and produced garish ice-cream full of crystals and tasting of powdered milk no matter how many times mum tried whipping it after it had already frozen! Dreadful things, really — but quite often they actually worked and there are old ones around that still do.

Cream rises they say — meaning in this case that a basically good product will remain on the scene, even if temporarily superseded by a visually more attractive device. It is interesting that the kero fridge is once more in demand because the mechanism is simple and the power supply storable — exactly what is needed for isolated areas. Try buying an old kero fridge in Lismore where the new settlers abound! The prices being asked are tremendous.

Mechanically, kero and LPG fridges work on what is called an absorption cycle. There are no moving parts and this is why there are forty year old fridges around that still work. Occasionally, the system developed a gas lock inside and as one reader rightly pointed out, the treatment was to stand the fridge on its head a couple of times. This usually allowed the bubble to free itself with a loud gurgle. You will need those sturdy farmhands to do the tipping however — old kero fridges weigh a ton!

The piping system in kero and gas fridges is sealed at the factory and cannot easily be repaired once the seal is broken. When buying one, check the back of the fridge for corrosion and a smell of ammonia. These are the signs of leaking refrigerant and if present, the fridge is nearly on its last legs, or worse. No matter how well preserved an old fridge looks, check its performance by lighting it up to see if the freezing compartment begins to cool down. As soon as it begins to feel cooler (this can take from a quarter to half an hour or perhaps longer), you can be fairly sure that the basic works are O.K. This then leaves you with a whole potential text-book full of problems relating to the burner.

The burner on a kero fridge is nothing more than a kero lamp stuck up a pipe and like all kero lamps they burn out, require adjustment or clog up. All kero burners are suspect and if you are buying an old fridge you really should check to see if you can buy replacement parts either from a manufacturer or second-hand. I know of haggard grown men who have been wandering hopefully around the nether regions of this great country for years still searching for that No. E/2008 burner that has to be lying there unused, somewhere.



Burners come in two styles — the very old yellow flame type such as our old Prefect used, and the modern blue flame type that are still being produced by Electrolux. The yellow flame type were quite robust, tolerant of abuse and gave out a low grade heat that caused the fridge to cool down quite slowly. It was for this reason that the hotter, blue flame type was introduced.

Predictably, the blue flame type had greater problems. It gave out greater heat and thereby produced a colder, faster freeze, it's true, but they have to be properly adjusted and trimmed and they *must* burn blue. If they do not — if they burn orange or yellow — then all is not well and the 'unwellness' will become worse unless you do something decisive and magnificent to them.

It is impossible to accurately describe how to service a blue flame burner. How do you roll a cigarette? It is not simply a matter of step one followed by step two — there is something more ineffable about it than that. Strictly speaking, you do not service a blue flame burner, you fiddle with it until it works.

It is all very well to demand in four languages, 'Keep the circular wick trimmed level at all times'. The fact is you cannot. If you turn the unevenly burned wick way up in order to get at the blackened part, by the time you have snipped fearfully at it with scissors or razor blade and turned it back down again, the internal gearing that drives

# KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES

the wick up and down is certain to have slipped so you end up with a sort of spiral edge, one end of which projects far above the rim of the burner. One sneaky way of keeping the wick more or less level is to turn it up a tiny fraction and rub the high parts away with your finger. You can do this with hurricane lamps too. Another dodge is to turn the wick down so as to expose the metal burner rim and to scrape this rim back with a sharp knife thus removing all the soot which otherwise absorbs kero and burns like a wick itself. You then have to gently turn the wick back up to its normal level and blow away all the loose particles. Very gentle, subtle corrections of this type will generally keep a blue flame wick just within the boundaries of total malfunction. Large, aggressive repairs are more risky.

Above all, never remove a wick entirely from the burner unless absolutely necessary. It is not that they are hard to get out but rather that the new ones are almost impossible to get *in*. If you do have to replace a circular blue flame wick, do not rip out the old one and march confidently into Dalgety's to demand a new one.

You: 'Give us a new E/2008 please'.

The Entire Shop Staff: 'Har-har-har-har! Pulled our old wick out did we? Tell you what, why not buy a new fridge? The power will be on out your way in another ten years. Quicker than ordering a wick'.

What you do is buy a new wick on the condition that you can exchange it if it does not fit, go back home and without wrecking the thing, try to calculate if it is the right size for the job. Only then should you remove the old wick. New wicks come in a cardboard box and must not be crushed or distorted in any way. You will find the wick is hardened at the top with size or glue so that it forms a rigid circle. On no account disturb this hardened area. It is there to enable you to feed the wick into the burner so that each of the internal feed cogs can grip the material evenly. Once the feed cogs have gripped the wick you cannot adjust any unevenness without removing the whole wick again and each time you do this the material will become more distorted. It is important to have it right first time. Need I mention these weary, kero stained men growing ever purpler about the forehead as they breathlessly try to feed their new E/2008 into the burner for the fourteenth time?

Blue flame wicks actually last a long time. If you buy an old fridge with what appears to be the remains of a wick still living inside it, there are various things you can do to rejuvenate the thing. First use a series of pins, needles and pieces of wire to hook out all the remains of dead mice and carbon adhering to the metal parts of the burner. This rarely accomplishes anything but is satisfying and builds up confidence. Next (still keeping well away from the real job), try *ironing* the bit of wick that dangles in the kero. The reason for this is that an old wick almost always sucks up some water and the water stays in the wick causing an orange flickering in the flame. What you do is dry out the

protruding flap of wick with a cloth and then sandwich it between several layers of absorbent material. You then take a warm iron and press the sandwich heavily for several minutes until any water in the wick is obviously driven out. You can even sew on an extension to the dangling part if it is too short to reach the bottom of the kero tank. Ultimately however, you will have to trim the thing using whatever method of surgery and faith healing you can muster — all else is mere displacement activity.

Last of all comes the satisfying bit — flushing out the tank. Really you should begin doing this before you buy the fridge because kero tanks rust out from the *inside*. After you have tested the fridge to see if it cools down, remove the tank and up end it so that at least a splash of whatever lurks unseen at the very bottom comes slurping out either the filler or burner holes. Be prepared not to believe what can lie at the bottom of a fridge tank. Welcome soot with a smile, greet slimy grey sludge with a knowing grin and back off if orange-red rust comes out.

If the tank is rusty under all that kero there is no real way to repair it. Araldite and other bogs including concrete do not seem to work when permanently immersed in kero. A rusty tank is likely to silently let go one dark night when you are asleep. That means at least two gallons of kero spreading over a wooden floor directly beneath a glowing burner. It might not catch but if it does — what then?

So you have tested your fridge, cleaned out the tank with one hundred and twenty flushes of kero, serviced the burner and the lamp is lit and smoking furiously in your already blackened kitchen. You are ready for the final act — replacing the whole gizmo into its proper slot. Where are the purplish, gaunt, haggard, weary, kero stained grown men at this juncture. I ask you, for there is not one of them to be seen. They are at the pub, that's where. Out, gone, skedaddled, leaving their wives to complete the foul deed if they possibly can for this is the moment of truth in which everything that can go wrong will — all at once!

What you now have to do is physically lift an elongated tin box of inflammable liquid into the air at arms length and ever so gently place its little wheels on two rails that run into a dark metal cave that is lower than your knees without spilling a drop or flooding the furiously smoking burner. Words cannot describe the physical stress required of the human frame as it slowly extends this awkward contraption into place whilst in a kneeling position on a hard floor.



# KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES

It is always at this moment that you look down to see beside you a delicately formed metal ring that you suddenly realise is supposed to already have been inserted into the top of the lamp glass.

Having begun again, this time with the metal ring in place, you position the little wheels on their tracks and gently rumble the tank into the fridge until it is fully inserted. Now comes the hardest part — you have to tilt up the burner end of the tank until it engages a thick pin that points down from the fridge body beside the flue. Only when you have done this and the whole burner locks into place with an alarming crunch can you relax. Predictably, you can be there for hours trying to make that pin engage so that no gap can be seen between the lamp glass ring and the flue.

Is it all worth it, I hear you cry faintly. Ultimately, yes. You now have a fridge that you can depend on, until it needs servicing again. Moreover you have a fridge that will keep on fridging — they are not like the electric ones

that keep switching on and off to maintain temperature. So the more you turn it up the colder it becomes until even the bottom shelf freezes up. They are vastly cheaper to buy than a new gas one and if the one you have just bought was built in the fifties, it is likely to last another twenty years. Their freezer compartments are generally tiny but if you actually need a freezer rather than a fridge, Eelectrolux used to produce a huge one which they enticingly called the 'Bottle Cooler'. Alternatively, check out the two cubic foot Chescold that is produced in Queensland and runs on gas.

Oh, and the Icy Ball? I've never seen one but they were apparently a huge device with a ball at each end. You stuck one ball in the fire and the other in your ice chest. Sounds strange but it means it is possible to build a freezing mechanism that can be powered by burning waste. I have seen the agricultural version of the same idea at Karangi, N.S.W. It came from an old dairy.

## HOW TO COPE WITH A KERO FRIDGE

By Janet Moorhouse, Whorouly South, Victoria.

(In particular a Defender, the most common make around)

A kero fridge is a permanently silent, self-contained refrigerating system of the absorption type which depends for its operation upon the application of heat. To achieve this, the flame of a small kerosene lamp is used.

After the kerosene lamp has been lit and the freezing unit commences its operation, the air immediately around the evaporator becomes heavier as it is cooled. It moves downwards and then across the bottom of the foodstuffs in the cabinet. In doing so it becomes slightly warmer and lighter and rises upwards to the evaporator, thus maintaining a continuous air circulation inside the cabinet.

### INSTALLING A KERO FRIDGE

- Choose a position which is accessible and convenient where the refrigerator will not be subject to undue heat from stoves, radiators or direct rays of sunlight.
- It should not be installed where it will be subject to excessive draughts.
- It must have firm foundations and be level.
- To work efficiently the unit requires reasonable ventilation — a space of at least 10 cm at the back and sides and 70 cm above the top of the cabinet.

### CHECKING EQUIPMENT

When you acquire a second-hand fridge, you will need to check to ensure you have all the correct bits and pieces and that they fit into their correct positions.

- (a) See that the burner (11) is properly located in

relation to the bottom of the boiler tube (5).

(b) See that the insert (7) is correctly located in the lamp glass (8).

(c) See that a good fit is obtained between the top of the lamp glass insert (7) and the end of the boiler tube (5). This adjustment is vitally important.

(d) See that the spring ring on the lower flange of the insert fits properly.

(e) See that the baffle (4) is properly located in the boiler tube (5).

### TO START THE REFRIGERATOR

Before setting the refrigerator in operation, the tank must be filled with best quality lighting kero. *Under no circumstances add any other fuel or substance to it.*

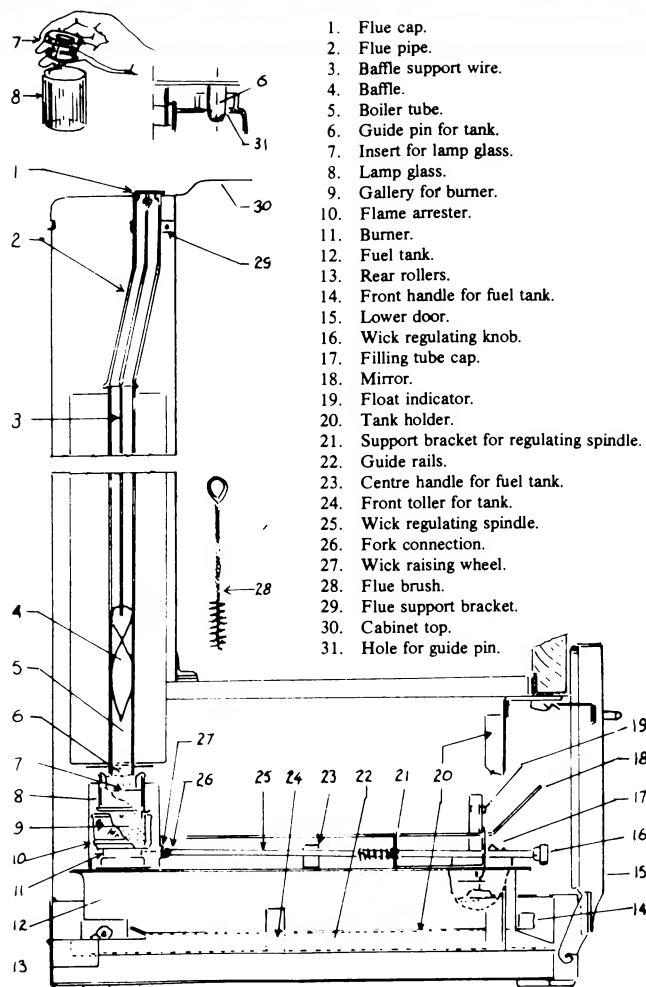
Remove the cap and carefully pour in kerosene until the indicator (19) reaches the upper red line which shows the tank is full. One tank full lasts one week.

It is important that the wick is saturated with kero before it is lit.

To adjust the height of the flame, turn the wick up by means of the knob (16) until smoke is just visible from the flue (2), then turn the wick down until no trace of smoke is seen.

This does not mean that the refrigerator must always be operated with the highest possible flame. By experience you will learn that, as a rule, it is not desirable.

# KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES



1. Flue cap.
2. Flue pipe.
3. Baffle support wire.
4. Baffle.
5. Boiler tube.
6. Guide pin for tank.
7. Insert for lamp glass.
8. Lamp glass.
9. Gallery for burner.
10. Flame arrester.
11. Burner.
12. Fuel tank.
13. Rear rollers.
14. Front handle for fuel tank.
15. Lower door.
16. Wick regulating knob.
17. Filling tube cap.
18. Mirror.
19. Float indicator.
20. Tank holder.
21. Support bracket for regulating spindle.
22. Guide rails.
23. Centre handle for fuel tank.
24. Front roller for tank.
25. Wick regulating spindle.
26. Fork connection.
27. Wick raising wheel.
28. Flue brush.
29. Flue support bracket.
30. Cabinet top.
31. Hole for guide pin.

## HINTS ON SERVICING YOUR REFRIGERATOR

### If the Flame Decreases or Goes Out

*No kero in the tank.*

Fill the tank.

*The flue pipe is partially or completely blocked with soot.*

Clean the flue pipe.

*Kerosene of inferior quality is being used.*

Tip it out and replace it.

*The wick cannot be raised or levelled up.*

This may be due to a fault in the wick raising mechanism. If unable to adjust, replace the burner with a new one.

*The burner was lit before the wick was sufficiently saturated with kerosene.*

Extinguish the flame, remove the fuel tank, turn down the wick and leave the burner unlit for about one hour to enable the wick to become saturated with kerosene. Trim the wick before re-lighting.

*The burner has been alight for so long that the wick is covered with char.*

Remove the tank and clean the wick and burner.

## If The Burner Smokes

*Lamp glass is broken.*

Replace broken glass with a new one making certain the insert is correctly fitted.

*The wick is turned up too high.*

Turn the wick down, extinguish flame and remove the kerosene tank. As a smoking burner causes soot to form in the flue, thoroughly clean the flue pipe, then clean and trim the wick setting the flame lower.

*The flame touches the baffle.*

Remove the tank, clean the flue and shorten the length of the baffle support wire a little.

*The refrigerator is installed in such a position that the burner is subject to severe draughts.*

Move it to a more suitable position.

*Badly trimmed wick allowing high point of flame.*

Trim wick.

*Spring ring not sealing against the inner wall of the lamp glass.*

Expand the spring ring.

*The insert not sealing against the boiler tube.*

Adjust the alignment until a good seal is made.

*Flame arrester blocked with dust or fluff.*

Clean flame arrester.

## If The Burner Gives Off an Odour

*The flame is turned too low.*

Turn the flame up.

*Kerosene has been spilt on the tank.*

Extinguish the flame and clean up the kerosene.

*A badly trimmed wick.*

Trim the wick.

## Irregular Refrigeration

*The refrigerator is not level.*

Level fridge making sure it is level both ways i.e. from back to front and side to side.

## If The Refrigerator Is Too Cold

*This can occur if the flame is set too high.*

The flame can usually be turned down at night or during cold weather. You will learn this by experience.





# KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES KERO FRIDGES

## Poor Or No Refrigeration

*Flame too low.*

Turn it up.

*The fridge is not level.*

Level it.

*Heat input is effected.*

Check the kero equipment.

*Air circulation around the freezing unit is restricted.*

Re-arrange the food in the fridge to ensure correct air circulation around the unit.

*The evaporator is heavily coated with frost.*

Defrost.

*Dirty kerosene*

Replace it with fresh kero.

If after trying all these remedies the fridge is still not working, it may be that something has temporarily disturbed the freezing cycle. Take everything out and turn the fridge upside down. Leave it like this for approximately half an hour, then turn it back to its usual position and re-light it. Hopefully it will now work properly.

## FACTS ON FRIDGES

By Bernie Rixon, Strathfieldsaye, Victoria.

The request for information about kerosene refrigerators in G.R. 28 certainly deserves an answer as there must be many of these refrigerators doing good 'grass roots' service.

This type of refrigerator uses a 'heat absorption' unit, i.e. a heat source such as kerosene burner, gas flame or electric element is used to heat and activate the gas in the system. As this heater is scientifically matched to each system, several conditions must be met to make the unit work efficiently. General headings are cleanliness, positioning of refrigerator and burner adjustment.

The cleanliness part is fairly easy. Keep the cooling fins at the back free from dust and the inevitable Christmas cards, pegs, combs and little toys that find their way over the back, blocking the fins and stopping air flow. Every couple of months the flue should be scrubbed clean inside with a wire brush to keep it free from soot and rust scale. Flue brushes can still be bought in most stores.

Positioning the refrigerator in the house is quite important. Correct ventilation is needed and this means a gap of approximately 6 cm between unit and wall and 30 cm above the refrigerator to allow good air flow. Draughty areas and ventilating to other rooms or outside must be avoided as difference in air pressure causes erratic burning.

Most of these units contain ammonia, hydrogen and water and as these elements combine and separate at different temperatures and levels it is most important that the refrigerator be stood level in both directions. The best way to achieve this is by using a short but accurate spirit level placed in the freezer compartment on the flat metal plate. This is actually the cooling coil and it is essential that it be level both ways for good refrigeration. Of course the refrigerator should be in the shade.

Two types of burner in common use are the Stokes, with bottle shaped glass and the Electrolux with parallel sided glass — in two sizes — both work on the same principle.

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Good burning relies on a clean, even wick. Old tanks and new kerosene are quite often contaminated with water and if a wick absorbs the water it is virtually useless. The easiest way to rectify the situation is to fit a new wick and wash out the tank with methylated spirit which absorbs water. I have found it easier to install the new wick if a piece of flexible wire is tied to it on opposite sides and used to pull up the wick while turning the knob. (I use fuse wire.) Wind it up and down a few times, pulling it with the fingers

Fig. 1.

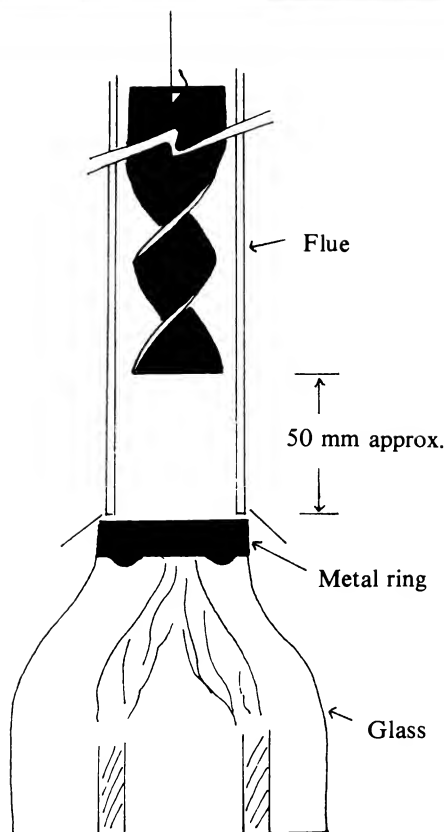
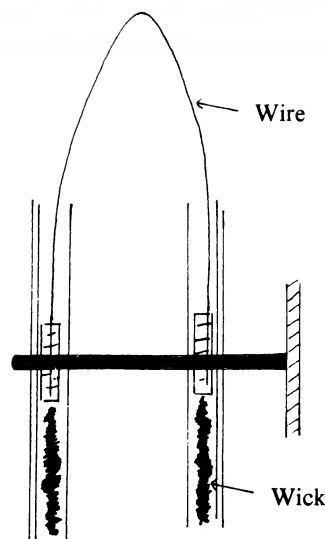


Fig. 2.



to make it as even as possible. See Fig. 2.

Having installed the wick it needs to be 'burnt in'. With approximately 3 mm of fabric exposed, dip quickly in kero and light. When it has burnt out, brush the charred end off level with the metal.

The position of the flame relative to the flue is the next factor. Most units have a conical section at the bottom of the flue which automatically locates the burner. (See Fig. 1.) Others have a locating pin. Whichever system is used, the flame should burn into the centre of the flue and this is important as the diffuser must spiral the heat to gain maximum heat transfer. Also there should be no gap between the glass and flue bottom and in the case of the Stokes burner, there should be a metal ring fitted to the top of the glass to spread heat evenly, otherwise the glass will crack and break. A properly burning flame should be even and blue with tiny yellow tips.

The diffuser or baffle is a piece of metal approximately 100 mm long and 20 mm wide with two twists on one end and is hung in the flue on a piece of wire, twisted end down, approximately 50 mm up from the bottom of the flue. I have noted quite often in my travels that old refrigerators passed from person to person had incorrect or no diffusers fitted.

A unit that has been idle for a few months will sometimes not work but this can often be fixed by standing the refrigerator on its head for half an hour and then putting it back on its feet. This recombines the elements

which may have separated in the idle period.

Another trick is to light the flame and when the pipes are quite hot (and pressurised) hit them firmly with a hammer or piece of wood. This can clear a blockage that may have occurred at the restriction point, but be careful to hit only the larger pipes as pressure up to 250 p.s.i. is usual in a hot system. These points apply to gas burning units also. Occasionally a unit, given this treatment works for some 48 hours and stops. Should this happen, fill it with concrete and drop it in the ocean — makes a great yacht mooring block. Other reasons for poor performance are overloading and blocked air circulation inside by packing shelves too tightly or putting trays on shelves, also badly fitting doors or gaskets, particularly in hot weather.

Should too much ice build up on the cooling coil it has an insulating effect and only cool temperatures result; the coil should be defrosted. This ice builds up extremely fast in humid weather if the door gasket does not seal properly.

These few lines cover the situation reasonably well and I hope they are of some benefit to someone with a cranky refrigerator and hot beer.

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# YOU CAN DO IT ON YOUR OWN

By Heather Hardy, Lue, N.S.W.

*I noticed the insecurity with which women on their own are viewing the move onto the land and while it is preferable to have a man to share our lives it is a fact that for some of us there is a strong possibility that it will be some time before we re-marry, if ever. My children were two, four and eight back then. They have grown with the lifestyle becoming more interested and obtaining more skills which in some ways has made up for the loss of the second parent. Rowena will be eleven this year and Adrian thirteen and I am proud of the way they are taking up the reins of life.*

After my last article was published in Grass Roots I received letters from all over the east coast, some from couples who were actually practising alternative lifestyle; others were from women who were unsure as to whether a woman could actually go it alone. I shall put down a little of how I did it and hope it may help others to realise that a good fulfilling life can be had by you and the kids even if forced to be a sole parent.

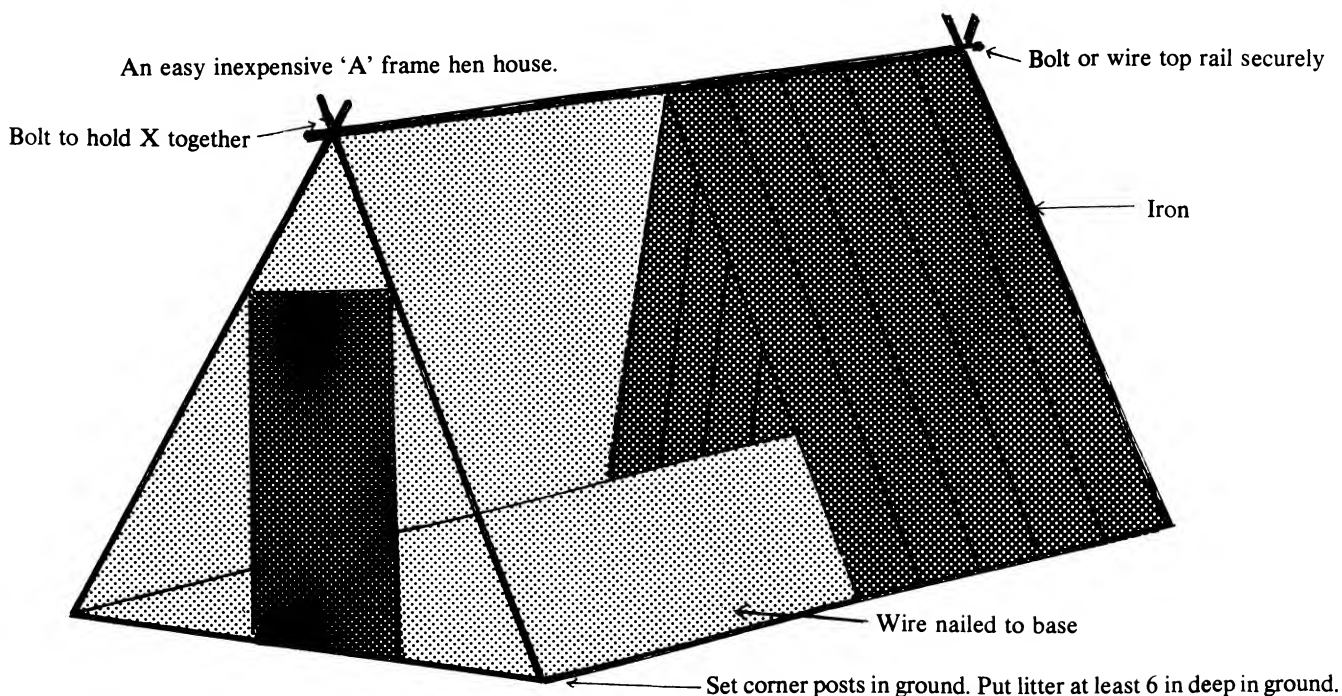
The essential difference between living here in the mountains as distinct from the city was the financial situation. In the six months that we lived in the city there was never sufficient money, but here we manage because of our independent lifestyle.

Old houses can still be found in the country relatively cheaply, though most are in need of repair. The one I bought in the Adelaide hills eight years ago certainly was. I tackled the jobs in order of importance or the ones for which I had the materials on hand. I taught myself to patch plaster and paint and although I am apprehensive about heights I was going to attempt the roof when I returned from holidays. But as I stayed here in N.S.W. and the cottage was sold I am still not sure whether I can paint a roof or not. However I shall find out soon as the roof here badly needs painting.

After the initial cleaning of the house I left the painting for days that were either too hot or too wet to work outside and attacked the garden. And let me say here that with the aid of a freezer or the proper pressure canner it is possible to have all your own vegies all year round.

Top priority, as far as I am concerned, is to complete the henhouse. Gardening requires a lot of manure and hens either ex-battery or point of lay, will actually produce quicker than a garden and even without eggs they are producing all that lovely manure. A relatively easy to construct henhouse can be built 'A' frame style. Consider using second-hand sawn timber or bush poles and iron. These can usually be picked up most weekends from the tip while you are there nosing around for old pots suitable for food and water. There is a market near Sydney on Saturdays where chooks go for as little as 30 cents a pair, so together with some tip scrounging this project could cost very little.

When the chooks are installed, *then* start thinking of the next project. This is the main secret of managing on your own — do one thing at a time and fit it into the daily routine. The longer you live this lifestyle the more you seem to fit into each day. I used to spend hours just watching the chooks — very pleasant but does not get



anything else done.

I think a critical mistake that is easily made, is to rush into everything all at once. Nothing is completed, nothing is housed properly and all that extra work all at once is just too much — it is far better to ease into things gradually. Start small and expand *slowly*. This applies to the veggie garden especially.

Select books from the library on whatever your next project is and really look into the whole thing before you start. If it is an animal yard plan and build it right the first time. It saves a lot of drama and makes the job of caring for the animals so much easier. When I first started eight years ago the place was hastily planned and I paid for it later with inconvenient conditions.

My children have always been involved as much as possible — they are older now and they are a big help, but even as littlies they helped a lot. We have a Samap mill and we each grind one cup of wheat each day and that works out enough flour for our needs. If we are going to have pasta, we have it on Saturdays as the two younger children love to use the pasta machine which is hand operated. It rolls the lumps of dough flat and then when put through the other side it cuts it into either spaghetti or taglatelle. The children cook this and grate the cheese to coat it, make the accompanying salad and I have a night off.

Breadmaking is often a family affair as is milking and processing the milk into various products. The satisfying side to all this is the children change from white flour products to wholemeal more easily for they would eat the bread, biscuits and goodies that they helped to make regardless of the ingredients.

I often receive bags of clothing which are given to me and some of these end up as patchwork covers for cushions, bags and the beds as well as the good clothes that fit me or I can make over for the children.

With a Vacola outfit to preserve fruit, by making jams and pickles along with what comes daily from the garden, together with shop bought pulses, we eat far better for much less. Hyperactive children are a thing of the past and some cash is freed for other things such as equipment to make a job easier. Projects like fencing are beyond me but by careful management I can usually pay someone to do the few jobs that I just cannot do myself.

Our present house is for sale as we are buying 80 acres soon. My boys are getting older and like the lifestyle and as they are both handicapped the larger acreage will be an advantage. The farm has an old miner's cottage on it in fair condition so my acquired skills in renovating will be put to use. There is no electricity (one less bill) which will present a challenge but we are all looking forward to going.

I have been living this lifestyle as a sole parent for eight years now. A fortunate legacy was growing up with parents in a similar style of living. My mother was and still is a keen gardener and animal lover and passed her skills on to me. My father had a fine mind and encouraged me to develop reasoning skills and what he called 'gumption', to get in and to have a go. I have not remarried as my twelve year old is quite severely retarded, but find life a joy and very fulfilling which I know is due mainly to my lifestyle and my faith in our Creator.

If anyone would like to write to me C/- Post Office, Lue 2744, they would be most welcome.



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Permaculture Nambour Newsletter, Summer/Autumn 1981, p. 32.

### SALT IN HOME-MADE SOAP



It is the salt in the fat that causes soap not to set. Fat must be absolutely free of salt for soap. All kinds of fat can be used e.g. old butter or lard. The day before you intend making soap, put fat on fire with about one gallon of water and let all melt thoroughly, then strain through hessian into a tub. Next day cut fat in four and lift out and scrape the bottom. You will have nice clean fat and all the salt and gravy in the water.

1. Make soap in a copper the day before washing. What is left around the edges of the copper will do for the washing next day.
2. If there is water under the soap, reboil for a little while.
3. Stir frequently while soap is cooling — this prevents water and soap from separating.
4. Make sure the fat is very well clarified and absolutely free from salt.
5. Put in a fairly warm place to set — not in a cold place.

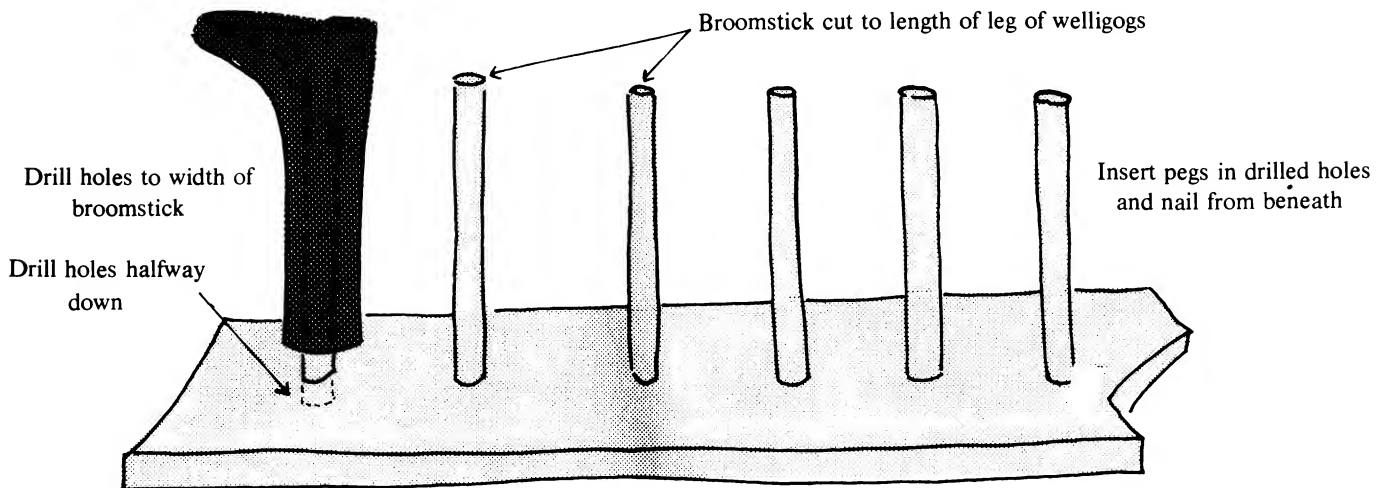


# WELLIGOG RACK

(For Rubber Boots, Wellingtons, Goloshes)

By V.H. Wood, Penfield Gardens, S.A.

The base needs to be heavy enough not to overbalance when loaded. Add a coat of paint for weather-proofing.  
Upturn welligogs over pegs — they do not clutter the verandah, collect water or catch crawlies.



Solid piece of wood to length required (ours had to accommodate six pairs)

## SURVIVAL TECHNOLOGY

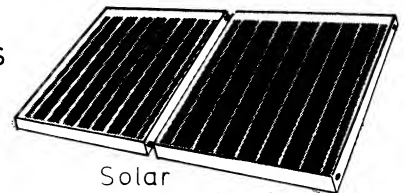
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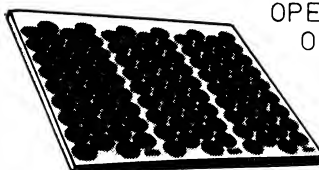
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# CHOOSING A HERD COW TO BE A HOUSE COW

By Geoff Heazlewood, Tasmania.

Genuine house cows are about as available as hens with teeth. Families who have trained that sound, suitable, rock-steady paragon that gives enough milk for all their kids and can be milked by any one of them are unlikely to want to sell her. Therefore, most would-be cow owners have the choice of buying a heifer calf to raise as a house cow, or buying a herd cow to convert.

The heifer calf will be much cheaper and in some ways more satisfactory, as she can be taught to lead and will become used to your kids and other animals well before she calves. The disadvantages are, you will not have any milk from her until she is about two years old; you will have to see her through her first calving and break her into milking — not so easy if you are inexperienced and she has tiny teats. An unmilked heifer of any age is much more of an unknown quantity, to her breeder as well as to you.

For these reasons many people prefer to choose cows that have been milked for at least one lactation in a commercial herd. I have sold several from our herd to smallholders and mostly we have managed to choose satisfactory candidates between us.

## First Choose Your Farmer

It helps if you know him personally, or know someone else who has bought a house cow from him. A trustworthy farmer will tell you the truth about his cows and be as anxious as you are to choose a suitable one. He will be able to advise you about feeding, mating, diseases, transport to your home, etc.

Farmers like to hear progress reports about animals they have sold, whether they are gratifying or disappointing. Remember they cannot do anything about an unsatisfactory cow if they do not know about it.

A dairy farmer sells cows if

- (a) he has too many
- (b) they are not good enough
- (c) they are calving at the wrong time of the year for him
- (d) he is going out of dairying.

Cows sold for the first two reasons will not be his best, but this does not necessarily mean they are no good to you. A Jersey in my herd is rather a poor proposition if she cannot manage approximately 3,000 litres at 5% butterfat over her ten month lactation (as a two year old). But this is an average of ten litres a day, which might be plenty for you. Equally, stud breeders in particular tend to have conformation and the show ring in mind. Any that do not measure up to that ideal picture in their mind's eye will be sold sooner rather than later. Not good enough? You will not mind if her rump is undulating rather than level and you might find her twisted nose rather endearing. If her teats are more like handlebars than table legs, then so much the better for you.



## What To Look For

The disadvantages of buying a herd cow arise because she is used to being with other cows (bovines have an inherent herd instinct) and to being machine milked. She is probably not halter broken and she might not be easy to approach and catch. To begin with she will miss her herd mates and may resent people's hands tugging at her teats.

To minimise these problems you will be looking for a young, adaptable cow of docile temperament. Some rather nervous herd cows will calm down wonderfully with individual love and attention, but they are unlikely to appreciate young kids. I suggest a three or four year old with at least one lactation behind her.

If your farmer is into herd recording with the Tasmanian Herd Improvement Organization or a similar scheme, he should be able to show you a computer printout of each cow's performance which includes monthly amount of milk, butterfat content, protein, white cell count and total production for the year. Ask him to translate this into litres per day. Remember there will be much more milk in the beginning of the lactation (peaking at six to eight weeks), but your cow should still be giving *some* milk ten months after calving, when it is normal to dry her off for two months rest before her next calf.

Herd cows are usually mated three months after calving. A heifer's first lactation is usually her lowest. She

is not considered 'mature' until she is five years old.

Recorded figures depend largely on the kind of feeding she has had. A cow used to irrigated pasture and bail feeding will not perform as impressively on your town block with a little hay. Ask how she has been fed so you will have a true picture, but no amount of feeding will make a poor cow into a milker. The potential must be there. I have two young cows this year that would make lovely house cows — quiet, easy to milk, good udders. The only drawback is that both are nearly dry, having converted their feed into fat instead of milk.

For hand operators a free-milking cow is a must. Ask if you can try her. She may have to be bailed up for this. If it happens to be midday and she fidgets a little, do not worry — cows are creatures of routine. Flies make them irritable too, but if she kicks right out at you, forget her. Like-wise if she is 'tough' to milk, unless you have wrists of steel. Your ideal cow is the one that begins to 'let down' as soon as you wash her udder. Her milk comes out readily (sometimes even before you start pulling) and she milks out quickly. She should have four sound quarters, no sign of mastitis, and her udder no lower than hock level unless she is an older cow.

#### Breed Considerations

I recommend Jerseys because they are small, economical and easy to handle. They may give less milk than larger breeds, but they also need less food. Their milk is generally higher in both protein and butterfat. They mature earlier but last just as long, so your Jersey house cow may start producing before she is two years old and hang in there until she is twelve, fourteen or sixteen.

Guernseys are similar but less common, Ayrshires and A.I.S. (Australian Illawarra Shorthorns) a bit bigger with lower butterfat milk. Friesians are biggest of all, often intimidating to a first time cow owner, and prone to giving a lot of milk without much cream. These are generalisations, of course. You might find a gentle Friesian with a freak butterfat level that is just the thing but on balance I would look for a Jersey or Jersey cross. A Friesian/Jersey cross is a very useful cow, good if you want a lot of milk and you *can* eat Jersey beef — we do.

If you are offered an older cow (eight to twelve years), she will be cheaper and with luck will give you at least one heifer calf to grow to milking age in time to replace her. But your older cow might be set in her ways. One twelve year old we sent to a good home fretted away to nothing. Another who went to a similar place gave great satisfaction and became a family pet.

#### Hip Pocket Hints

Prices do not stay static for long, but right now you can expect to pay up to \$300 for a sound, young cow with production records (or those of her dam and sisters) behind her. Crossbreds and saleyard cows should be cheaper and most cows older than approximately eight go out for 'chopper price' — their current market value as meat. This fluctuates all the time.

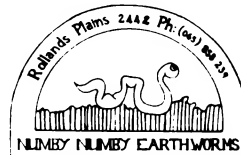
Sale yards are a real lucky dip that can just as easily be unlucky. The problem is that if you buy a cow with mastitis, or infertile, you have no comeback. Cattle bought privately are usually guaranteed fertile and sound, at least, and are often guaranteed in calf.

Price will depend also on the time of the year. A dry cow with longer than two months to go before she calves should be cheaper than one in milk and in calf. Weaned heifer calves cost about \$70, yearlings \$150, and in-calf heifers between \$200 and \$300, depending on breed.

If you are converting a herd cow the best idea is to buy one a month or two off calving. This way you avoid upsetting her equilibrium and milk production in mid-lactation. You can have her settled in and used to being tied up, led around and fed in your bail before you have to tackle hand milking. Once she calves, home is where her calf is and the herd cow has become a house cow.

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# Overcoming Council Constraint

By Chris Heining, Stroud N.S.W.

About two years ago Vite and I decided we wanted to build our own house using mud brick and bush timber. We also decided that we wanted a country lifestyle and began the long search for 'the perfect acreage' next door to a 'picturesque village'. Of course, we did not achieve either of these aims but we did find a one acre block which we both loved instantly, in a village we found particularly pleasing. The village also boasted the largest mud brick complex in Australia, the Monastery of the Sisters of the Community of St. Clare, so we naturally assumed there would be no barriers to earth building.

After purchasing our land, we approached the Great Lakes Shire Council with regard to our building plans and were promptly 'flooded' by a very definite *No!*

The Council had adopted an earth building code only a month before which permitted construction only in rural zones. As our block was within the village boundary, we were not allowed to build using mud bricks. Amazement, rage, rebellion, depression and doubt about the future of our dreams set in and were to last for what seemed a *long* five months.

At first we did consider compromise, but the unfairness of the situation 'got to' us and we decided to see what could be done to change Council's decision. Kevin Osmond, who was the builder in charge of construction of the monastery at Stroud, brought us the address of the Earth Building Forum and suggested we contact them regarding the situation. Ian Factor from E.B.F. visited us, established that we were serious and promised E.B.F. back-up wherever possible. I wrote to Grass Roots magazine requesting advice from their readers while at the same time read everything I could find which related to building approval problems with councils.

We then visited our local councillor and after a considerable amount of argument and discussion, she agreed to see what could be done.

We felt that Council's main arguments might be the local population's objections, so we drew up a petition which stated that the people signing had no objection to earth building in the village area and began canvassing support. Then came endless hours spent telling people about earth building, easing away doubts and going over the plans with those who had fears of mud huts springing up everywhere. This part was very hard to take at times and we went through an extremely exhausting and tense period of being at the centre of an issue.

Vite, meanwhile, maintained a dogged persistence in our local councillors' direction and finally obtained the promise of a motion to amend the code to allow earth

building in Stroud to be discussed at the next Planning Committee meeting. Our councillor had two others who were prepared to co-sign the motion but we needed seven votes to have it passed.

I started telephoning councillors to arrange meetings to discuss the issue and almost ended up screaming with frustration. They either did not want to know, said they could not go against Council policy, or lectured me on the evils of earth building after admitting they had never seen a mud brick. However, from these phone calls I did discover what objections would be brought up at the meeting. These were:

- that earth building would not be accepted by other residents in urban zones
- that earth building would de-value other properties in the area
- that Council would have no means of maintaining control over the quality of the material being used
- that earth building would not be 'aesthetically pleasing' in an urban situation.

We contacted E.B.F. again and arranged for their representatives to do a presentation for us at the meeting. To counter Council's objections we asked E.B.F. to obtain:

- evidence of earth building in other urban zones
- letters from Real Estate agents showing the high resale value of earth buildings and copies of actual 'For Sale' advertisements
- photographs and slides of earth buildings in urban settings
- a profile of our planned home to dispel the 'mud hut' fears.

At this stage we had received many letters full of advice and encouragement and offers of assistance from the readers of Grass Roots, each one giving us a much needed boost in the morale department while we prepared for the meeting.

We were to experience further frustration as our meeting with Council was deferred to a month later than the original date. Finally the meeting! We were allowed a twenty minute presentation in which Colin Wilkinson, an architect and member of the Forum, was our main spokesman. Colin pointed out that we were not arguing the structural viability of earth building as this had already been proven and accepted by Council previously in the earth building code, but what we were arguing was the discrimination between urban and rural zones. The documented evidence and photographs were tabled for councillors' inspection and the profile was put on display.

The presentation was followed by discussion amongst councillors and questions were put to both Colin Wilkinson and Ian Factor. The main points were those listed earlier and Council's concern that excavation for the earth required would result in 'scarring of the landscape'. The E.B.F. made an honest and straight forward presentation and answered the questions which arose with knowledge and documented back-up and we are grateful for their assistance.

An amendment to the motion was put forward to allow earth building in all areas of the Shire instead of only Stroud and to our surprise this was passed, with two conditions attached:

- public advertisement be placed for objections
- details of excavation be forwarded with plans to Council.

The motion itself was then put forward and passed with a majority of nine to three making earth building permissible in all areas of the Great Lakes Shire.

We immediately submitted our plans to Council and are now awaiting a reply. We would like to thank E.B.F. for their assistance and to anyone else having problems with codes and regulations we say, 'Do your best to change them and your best means refusing to give in'.

*The Grass Roots note enquiring whether we had received a reply from Council came in the mail today along with that long awaited reply, so I am sending this promptly so you are able to share our reward for 'plugging away'. Yes, our plans have been approved with no alterations at all, not even a comment on use of second-hand materials which we thought Council may question. We do have to forward a report from a structural engineer, mainly because several of the councillors have visions of the house cracking down the middle, plus specifications for the bush pole roof, but otherwise they are following the standard procedure as for any housing development. We are very pleased, of course, with the result of our efforts and are now happily contemplating the finished product while 'muddying the days away'.*

#### RESOURCES

Earth Building Forum,  
C/- Ian Factor,  
67 Colin Street,  
CAMMERAY 2062.  
Phone 922-2461.

(See G.R. No. 31, p. 84 for further information.)

Other useful resources include:

*Low Cost Country Home Building*, available from the Department of Environment & Planning, Box 3927, G.P.O. SYDNEY 2001. Price \$3.00 plus 50¢ postage. See G.R. No. 30, p. 92 for description.

*The Owner Builder Magazine* — a quarterly magazine edited by John Archer. Available at newsagents or by subscription from P.O. Box 4036, MELBOURNE 3001.

#### PROVERB

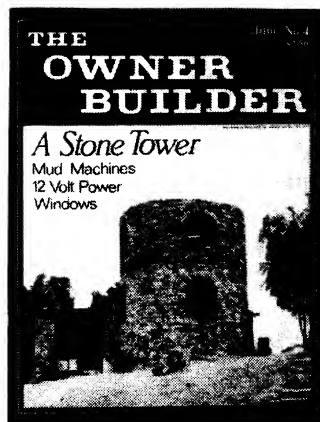
Beware of the fore-part of a woman, the hind-part of a mule and all sides of a priest.  
(16th C. proverb).

#### THIS AND THAT

*Our parrot wears a plastic mac  
The reasons here are stated,  
He wears it as he wants to be  
Poly-unsaturated.*

Canberra Bird Notes,  
per Howard Jarman.

Reprinted from *The Bird Observer*, official magazine of the Bird Observers Club, P.O. Box 185, Nunawading 3131.



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Edited  
by  
John Archer

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# EDUCATING GRASS ROOTS CHILDREN

By Maureen Leslie, Yea, Victoria.

A Reply to Abigail Neville (G.R. 30)

I thoroughly enjoyed Abigail Neville's article on p. 16 of G.R. 30. I particularly liked her advice on living for the present instead of bemoaning and pining for an unattainable perfection in the future.

I hope Abigail will not mind if I take up a few points about the education of children and discuss them — positively I hope. I found many of her ideas and suggestions 'spot on' and really helpful but there were a few others with which I disagreed.

Ten years ago I would have agreed wholeheartedly with everything in the article, but now that my five children are aged between fourteen and twenty-one and I have had a chance to try out some of these ideas, I am not so sure. The dreaded teenager is a completely different kettle of fish from the pre-schooler or the primary school child, and I found that I had to modify a great many of my ideals during this stage of their development. I was trained as an Infants' teacher and have taught five, six and seven year olds in several schools in N.S.W. and Victoria. Now I run a mobile library service to thirteen small rural primary schools in Victoria. I visit each school fortnightly and give lessons in library usage and literature, so I am in regular contact with four hundred children and twenty-three teachers. I have taught in both state and private schools and once taught music in a high school.

In my opinion, Abigail's suggestions for teaching young children at home are really great, and if your children are normal, healthy and intelligent and have parents who are enthusiastic about life, you could hardly go wrong. Teaching *is* easy under these circumstances but it is not always easy for the teacher with a class of over thirty children, perhaps only a third of whom come from stimulating and interesting homes. Often the other two-thirds are children who have been propped in front of TV from the age of one year or told to 'go outside and play — anything to have them out from under parents' feet. Many of these kids are dull and stodgy and have no self-motivation left, so it is up to the teacher to stimulate them and motivate them. Then there are the children who are emotionally disturbed, mentally or physically handicapped, spoilt or just plain naughty, so you can imagine that teaching is not *always* easy.

A tiny word of warning about the phonics method of teaching reading. It was the way most of us were taught to read so it obviously works in most cases. It is a good method if combined with 'full-word recognition' and with plenty of variety. However, some children have a poor auditory memory and so cannot remember the exact sound of a word except with much practice. Others have a poor visual memory and respond well to a phonetic approach. You need to see what your child responds to best and concentrate on that at the beginning so that he feels confident from the start and does not become discouraged.

My main point of disagreement with Abigail is her statement, *Of course Grass Roots people must eventually build their own schools so that children will learn everything they need to know . . . . .* I have several reasons for this disagreement.

Victoria, to my knowledge (and it is probably much the same in other states) is littered with the ruins of alternative schools which were started with the highest ideals and philosophies during the last decade or so. These schools often relied heavily on the enthusiasm, experience and ability of a couple of leading lights among the teachers and parents. After a year or two, these people may move on and the school may not have developed within itself the traditions with which to carry on. Squabbles break out between parents with different ideas and this has a disastrous effect on the children.

Many state schools already have the facilities and teachers to implement most of the items on Abigail's ideal curriculum, in both primary and secondary schools. The biggest problem, as far as I can see, is the zoning rules. There is such a variety of policies and curricula within the state systems these days, that it should be possible for most parents to find a school which suits their philosophies. So such parents should keep lobbying politically for permission to move their children from the zoned school to a school of their choice if they feel it is necessary.

Of course, I realise that I am generalising and there are many circumstances in which a special school may be needed for a special child. At the moment, I think the Rudolf Steiner schools provide a curriculum and use teaching methods which seem to me to fit in with Abigail's ideas. Also, *some* of the newer alternative and community schools are very successful but they are in the minority.

Here are some of the activities I have seen in Victorian state primary schools in the last few years. Admittedly, most of the schools were small (less than ninety pupils), but two of them had enrolments of over three hundred.

Parents, staff and children worked together to build a very exciting and original adventure playground on a very steep piece of waste land.

A permaculture garden was set up in a corner of the playground.

Children built, with the help of their teacher, a mud brick cubby house.

Children and teacher set up a mini farm in the school grounds. They built a chook pen and stockyard, travelled to auctions to buy poultry and a steer and are looking after their animals responsibly.

A highly successful vegetable garden was set up in the school grounds. The children took home buckets full of fresh, organically grown vegetables. One day a week they cooked their lunches from their own school grown veges.

One school, while studying and comparing different types of work, visited a self-sufficient farm nearby. They saw a wind generator powering an owner-built house, a solar hot water system and greenhouse, beehives, sheep, fruit and vegetables.

One very keen parent brought to the school several trailer loads of stable manure. The children spread it on their new garden with great gusto. The same parent then accompanied teachers and children across town to the recreation reserve. They brought back buckets full of oak leaves which they spread as mulch. When the acorns, which were caught up with the leaves, started to sprout, anyone who wanted could take home a little oak tree.

These were all outdoor activities but lots of maths work was needed to draw up plans, measure timber and wire, etc. Plenty of reading and writing was also part of the follow-up work, as was the developing and printing of photographs of progressive stages of each project.

Of course, these are all isolated instances and do not necessarily result from a school policy which specifically endorses a programme of 'learning through doing', and the development of appropriate skills. However, each individual school council in Victoria is expected to draw up its own unique school policy, so if you feel strongly about the necessity for change, have yourself elected to the school council and go to it.

To me, it seems a pity to withdraw our children from a state school that is in any way reasonable and whose principal and staff are approachable and ready to listen to new ideas from parents. I think it is better for our children not to be made to feel as if they are some sort of elite. A well balanced personality is more likely to develop in a person who has had the opportunity to learn to rub along with all sorts of people from all walks of life. I also feel that we are perhaps depriving all the children of the experience of meeting people from a wide range of lifestyles and with a wide range of ideas and philosophies if we withdraw some who probably have a great deal to offer to their classmates and teachers. Kids, especially teenagers, spend lots of time just talking to each other and comparing notes about their families and home lives. When our sixteen year old daughter, Michaela, started at a new high school after we moved to the country, a group of her Year 11 classmates were discussing family meals. 'Yuk!' she said. 'My mum chops up dandelion leaves and puts them in the salad'. Groans of commiseration all round till another girl said, 'Really, so does mine'. They have been great friends ever since. Last year, one of the topics for H.S.C. English was *Confronting the Future*. So Michaela took along details of our solar hot water system and also a selection of our books and magazines about alternative lifestyles and energy sources. Much discussion was generated. If she had been at a separate 'Grass Roots' type of school, she would have been 'preaching to the converted', and the children at her present high school would have missed hearing of some of these things at first hand.

It is possible to infiltrate the system from within so that lots of people with whom we come in contact can absorb some healthy new ideas. I am not saying that it is only 'Grass Roots' types who have healthy ideas — just that a friendly interchange benefits everyone.

There are numerous ways of bringing about change in our schools. Become involved with your children's school — go to meetings, hear reading, invite teachers home for dinner and so on. Send tasty health food e.g. carrot cake, vegetable quiche, wholemeal home made bread, etc. to cake stalls and school socials. They go like hot cakes! When our youngest son was in Grade 6, his class held a cake stall for the rest of the children to raise money for charity. Dom made a pumpkin cake, but, being a bit of a psychologist, knew that his potential customers would probably not be much attracted by this. So he described his concoction as a secret 'golden cake' and refused to tell anyone the ingredients. Of course every slice of the cake sold in no time and only when the last slice was being sold did he let out the awful secret.

If the mothers' club produces a cookery book as a money making venture, suggest a vegetable or health food collection. Have your children give hand made presents to teachers and friends for Christmas and birthdays. Donate the *Grass Roots Bumper Book*, or other suitable books that have been reviewed in *Grass Roots*, to the school library. I carry *Grass Roots* and *Earth Garden* on my mobile library and they are much in demand.

If the school has electives or clubs and is calling for parent volunteers, offer to help with one — gardening, bread making (grind the wheat, make bread and butter from go to whoa), stick spinning, vegetable dyeing, weaving or start a bush band. Whatever your thing, it is sure to be appreciated.

If you know someone who has something interesting to impart to children, and who would be prepared to come and talk, offer their services. 'Friends of the Earth', 'Men of the Trees' people who have interesting crafts or occupations, people who have travelled, grandparents who can tell children about 'life in the old days', people who are attempting to live a self-sufficient life — all these types of topics interest children and teachers.

Most importantly, do not preach. Teachers will generally be very grateful for your help but they will not thank you for interfering. After all, if we really believe in developing our own individuality and in having the freedom to choose our own lifestyle, this implies tolerance of the freedom of others to choose a different way. Meg's comments in *Gumnut Gossip* in G.R. 30 put it in a nutshell. I realise that many people will disagree with what I have written, so perhaps I could finish with a quotation from the introduction to Thea Stanley Hughes' magazine *Movement*.

*These words are written not as a persuasion of belief, but as a stimulus to thought.*

# LAYING A STONE FLOOR

By Nev & Mony Ackland, Nairne, S.A.

In many parts of Australia the availability of flat stone or slate makes it possible to build at minimum cost, a solid floor that will outlast the building itself.

We have laid large pieces of random slate on a cement floor throughout our house and flagstone (very large pieces about 4 in thick) in the bathroom and laundry.

Most of the building ruins in this district have stone floors. Despite the fact that the roofs have long since disappeared and walls crumbled, the floors are as good as the day they were put down. The pioneers often laid flagstones straight on the earth and filled the cracks with whatever material was available — cow manure, tar, lime, mortar or dirt. If they were lucky their floor stayed reasonably dry but in many cases damp rose up and made life miserable. Many of the ruins in our area were abandoned for this reason. These days it is possible to lay a floor using materials that prevent damp rising and keep the floor dry and warm.

The easiest and cheapest way to lay a flagstone floor is to begin with a bed of fine sand covered with heavy duty builders plastic. Another bed of sand 3 or 4 in thick is placed on top of this. The thick flat stones are bedded into this and the gaps between filled with cement mortar and carefully trowelled smooth. If the stone wobbles before it is pointed the mortar will soon crack and become loose. It takes a long time to lay a good floor but it is worth the trouble.

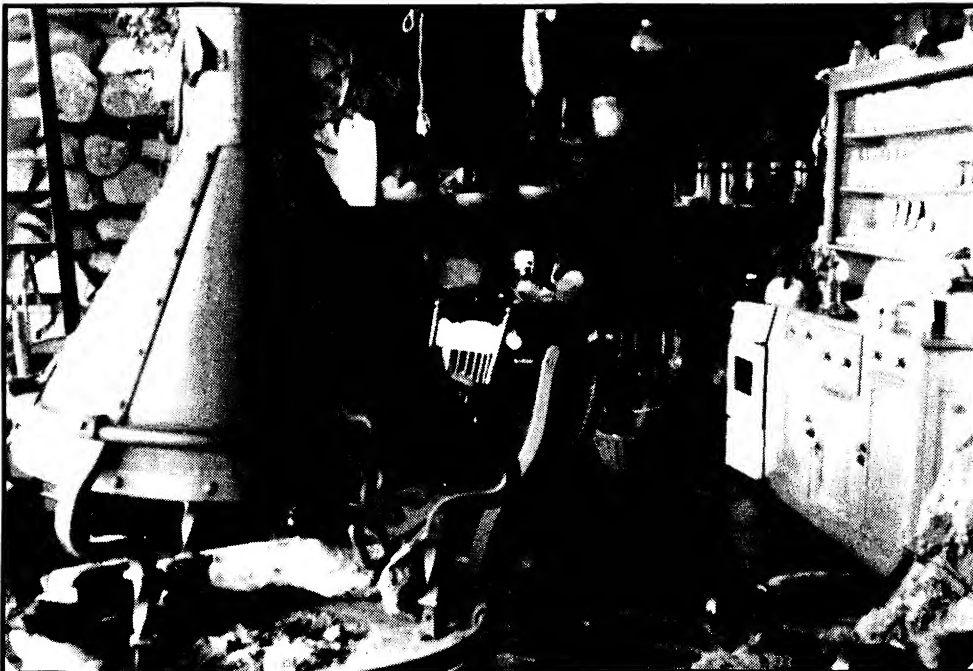
Another popular method is to lay stones or thin slate on top of a raft foundation or cement floor. We laid slate on a 4 in reinforced cement floor that already had a builders plastic damp course beneath. We poured a 2 in

layer of wet cement over the floor several feet at a time, bedding the slate in as we went and tapping it into the cement with the handle of a hammer or laying a block of wood on top and tapping that. A long straight edge is essential to ensure your floor ends up flat. Pour and lay only a small amount at a time. Clean each section carefully with a sponge before you move onto the next. Stones can be pointed afterwards with a fine mix of plasterer's sand and cement coloured with a cement pigment if you wish. Pointing can take as long as the actual laying and can be slightly recessed or flush with the surface of the stones. The former can look more attractive but the latter is easier to keep clean.

A short cut that gives reasonable results is to bed stones in without pointing or allowing cement to fill the gaps. Let the floor set and then make a dry mix of one part cement to four parts plasterers sand and sweep it into all the cracks, crevices and gaps. Hose the floor down with a fine spray. Remove the worst of the cement and leave it to set. If care is taken the floor should come up clean, if not, you may have to use diluted hydrochloric acid to clean the stones a few days later. Either way it is a quick method of pointing a floor and can also be used when laying bricks and some tiles.

Yet another foundation for your floor may be rubble and small stones topped with coarse sand. Begin by laying 4 in of rubble or small stones straight on the ground, cover this with 2 or 3 in of finer material and finally a thin layer of gravel upon which your sand can be laid or cement poured.

In theory dampness cannot make it up through the



View of the kitchen showing our slate floor

coarse material. Our local building inspector says it is far superior to plastic if done correctly. Remember, when laying any type of concrete floor some reinforcing is essential. Do not forget to install all your plumbing and wiring before you start to lay your floor.

In many parts of Australia timber for floors is a major expense, even when using second-hand materials.

Sometimes stone can be had for nothing from an old building or straight from the ground. Gravel can be scrounged from the creek and cement and plastic sheet cost little more than nails would for a conventional timber floor. It is bound to keep you fit and if not will afford your local chiropractor a living.

Happy flooring!

# TANNING SHEEPSKINS

By Margaret Evans, Ulladulla, N.S.W.

May I say how much I enjoy reading **Grass Roots**. I keep going back and browsing through them. They are inspiring and very interesting. It is good to see other folk wanting to go 'far from the maddening crowds' back to a life we are all meant to live — close to nature. I hope that everyone's dreams will be realised, that they will all have a life of peace and contentment on their own bit of land. One day — soon we hope — we will be on our own bit of land but at the moment we have to be content with picnics on it as we live in town. Homes are very dear to build today.

Below are my instructions and method for treating sheep skins — handy for those on farms who grow their own meat and do not want to waste, or cannot sell, the skins. The treated skins make excellent floor mats but can be a little too stiff for clothes, depending on the tanner. I have found it more sensible to keep the fleece short on sheepskin rugs otherwise it can cause a nasty trip up.

The first prerequisite is that the skin be fresh and moist. You will need the following:

½-1 gallon kerosene

cooking salt — sufficient to thickly cover the skin

1-2 packets bicarbonate of soda

half a house brick

lid from a tin of shoe polish — it must have a sharp edge

thick rubber gloves — thin ones quickly perish with the kero

large plastic bag, 'super' bag or sheet of plastic

- Lay fresh skin out, skin side up. It must not be more than one day old.
- Trim off fat and any meaty bits.
- Make a paste from salt and kero and apply thickly over the entire skin. Rub gently with the brick, as the skin is fragile and will tear easily.
- Fold up, skin side in and place in the large plastic bag. Secure ends. This will stop the flies from blowing the skin (Yuk!) Leave a day or two.
- Open out the skin. Make a paste from kero and carb soda, apply thickly. Rub carefully with the brick to work paste into the skin. Use plenty of paste. The fat, etc. will roll off as you work the skin over the next few days.
- Repeat above every day for a week to ten days.

Remember to fold up the sheepskin flesh side in and store in tightly secured plastic bag in the shade. Flies are determined fellows but I was not worried by them — possibly the kero repels them.

- If any fat still adheres to the skin scrape gently with the shoe polish lid. This will thoroughly clean the skin. Fat and the like should have been cleaned off with the kero paste and brick earlier on.

- Rinse skin in cold to warmish water or hose to remove dirt.

- Wash carefully in warm soapy water several times or until you are satisfied the fleece is clean or white enough. Rinse clean.

- Whilst drying, occasionally rub with the edge of the brick or some emery paper until the skin is soft and fluffy (well almost) like chamois. *Do not* dry in hot sun.

- When fleece is dry comb with a fleece comb or hand flicker. Stand guard, after all the hard work you will want to be the first to run your toes through your very own sheepskin rug.

This is a simple procedure taking only half an hour or less a day. If the sight of blood and gore puts you off the fleece can be washed before tanning. It does not seem to matter how many times you apply the kero and carb soda (make up fresh paste each day) but skins must be worked on for at least a week, the longer the better. The idea is to saturate the skin each day with the paste.

These floor rugs can be washed in warm (not hot) soapy water when they become dirty. To soften skin as it dries, rub from time to time. My mats are nine to ten years old and still in good condition.

# Making Charcoal

Graham Murchie, Ashgrove, Qld.

In response to W.T. Jenkin's request in G.R. No. 30 for information regarding the making of charcoal for use in a blacksmith's forge, I have never tried making it, however if I pass on what a few oldtimers have told me it may be of some help. Firstly Australian eucalypts make excellent charcoal with high calorific value. May I mention here that one very old timber cutter who taught me quite a lot remarked that, at one time, he made more money out of selling the bark from the ironbark trees (*E. crebra* syn. *E. racemosa* & *E. paniculata*) than he did from selling the timber. This bark was used by wheelwrights for heating and expanding the iron tyres prior to fitting them onto the wooden wheel. It was laid out in a circle and the iron tyre laid on it. Apparently it burned hotter than timber and heated the tyre quicker and more evenly. However, I digress, as I am wont to do quite often.

If I were to attempt making charcoal this is how I would approach it. First, I would find a cleared spot centrally located to the timber source, with due regard to the dangers of accidentally starting a bushfire (one way of getting a large amount of charcoal I suppose!) Next I would dig out the sod to a depth of 15 cm and stack it nearby. Dig out an area with ample space on which to stack the timber. Then I would stand an old 15 cm diameter stovepipe upright in the centre of this area and stack the timber neatly around it in a dome shape. The timber would have to be cut into short lengths i.e. 60 cm and any round timber thicker than my lower leg I would split lengthwise to facilitate burning. I would try to make sure that the timber was all of the same size and of a similar type and that there was no bark attached.

When the heap was big enough I would pull out the stove pipe, that is providing I had not stacked it too tight around the pipe in which case I would have to start all over again. Then I would cover the heap with a large quantity of leaves and then the sod to prevent too much air from getting in. More sod than had been dug out would be

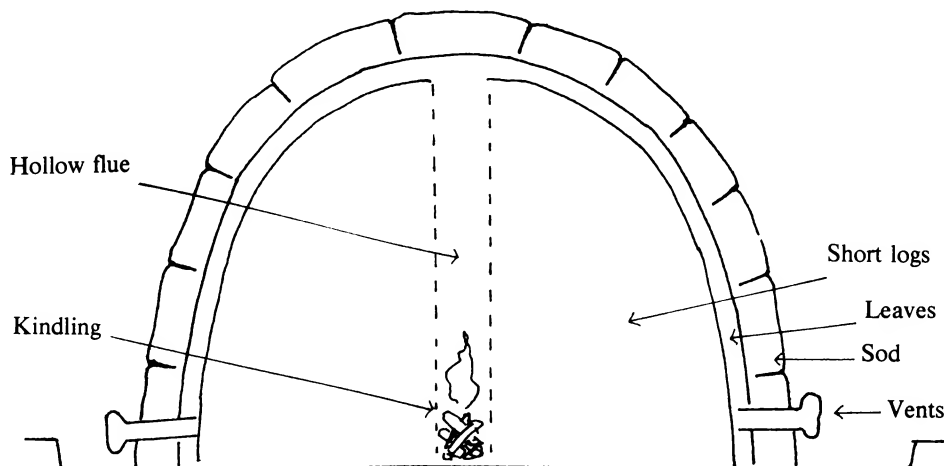
needed and this could be dug from around the perimeter of the heap. This would help prevent bushfires.

The ignition would be via the vertical flue created by the stovepipe. I would put a small amount of kindling in the bottom and when it was well alight and the logs had started to burn, close the chimney up with sod. The burning process would probably take a couple of weeks and would need to be controlled by making air vents in the side. I do not know how much air is required so it would be a matter of trial and error. Air vents could be made of earthenware pipes with sun dried clay plugs or maybe even syrup or milo tins with a large hole cut in the bottom and lids still attached. These could be set in the sod walls with the lid ends facing out. Lids or plugs can be removed as desired.

Now that is how I would do it at the moment, however I am told that it is hard to achieve a totally uniform product and it seems to me that it is wasteful because no byproducts are collected. Some figures I have found give the products of charcoal making as follows:

- charcoal 25%
- methanol 2%
- tar and oil 5%
- gas 18%
- water, etc. 50% by weight.

In the late 1930s the Queensland Forestry Service conducted experiments with portable sheet steel kilns which were reported to give a very uniform product and took only two days to complete ignition. So if a large quantity of charcoal was required it would be worth making up a small kiln. If I remember correctly there was a design for a wood fired stove in *Permaculture 1* which utilised the heat from combustion, used the smoke for a smokehouse and collected all the byproducts, creosote, etc. so maybe you could combine the two ideas. The basics remain the same, wood burnt in the absence of air is all that is required.





# AN ANGLO NUBIAN EXPERIENCE

By Russell Parker, Inverell, N.S.W.

Up until several months ago I had no recollection of ever seeing an Anglo Nubian goat even though amongst my newspaper clippings there were several depicting them. The clippings are six years old.

Suddenly, there they were at a local goat show. Admittedly they were top quality stock but the effect was immediate. I fell in love with them. To most people the long pendulous ears and prominent Roman nose are ugly, but you either love them or hate them. Nubians are like that. I then visited the home of the owner of the couple of does I saw and met the full family of Anglo Nubians. It is very difficult to describe how attractive the small herd was.

I then vowed to obtain some and after much searching and variation in quality and price, I purchased two doe kids, four and five months old respectively. They were only appendix C and D registered — at the bottom of the ladder — but very attractive all the same. The C doe Juliette was brown with a black stripe down her back with white socks and face. The D doe was more a coloured Saanen than an Anglo Nubian as her full herd book mother had an affair with a Saanen buck. All the same her black and tan colouring and white patch on one side was also very appealing. The 'girls' immediately set about showing me that they were in control and my knowledge of goat keeping which was minimal at that point, took a huge plunge forward.

They were a little wild at first, having come from a free range farm and their mothers, to a small section at the back of a suburban house. Hand feeding of tit-bits soon calmed them, but they still found the small yard confining and in no time at all managed to push, lean and poke until the wire netting fence developed holes large enough to permit them to escape and 'prune' my apricot trees.

Next I placed mesh, left over from concreting, against the netting. Even though five months old, they managed to wiggle and squirm their way through the holes in a manner reminiscent of Houdini. After replacing that mesh with some three inch size the 'darling girls' turned their talents on the decorative concrete wall which separated them from the house and garden. The wall is five feet high and that was safe enough but the two block width that jutted at right angles to the wall as support was just too much temptation. I would not have believed it had I not witnessed the act myself. They would run flat out at the corner, bounce off, turn completely in mid air and walk



along the top of the wall. An additional three feet of wire netting hanging inwards finally stopped them.

By this time they had really settled in and it only took them to hear me slam the car door upon arrival from work and they would be calling for attention. If I was already at home and spoke a little louder inside, they would hear me and call. Needless to say their devotion was mainly food orientated. Besides their rations of lucerne chaff and pellets I cut bundles of Johnson's grass which they loved, from nearby vacant blocks. Lesson one — Isabel, the half Saanen, was very susceptible to green feed and scoured badly. Medication soon put her right and I learnt to dry the grass in the sun for a day or so before feeding it. Dry corn stalks and leaves from the garden were also favourites. They ate the cornstalk right to the clod of earth that came with it. As all goat lovers would know bread scraps are harmful to goats but it was difficult to explain that to them after we had fed them a few tit-bits as they really loved it.

As the yard was only small attempts were made to tether the goats on nearby vacant blocks. They had a wonderful time browsing there, but no sooner were they relaxed when a semi-trailer would roar down nearby and the 'girls' would almost jump out of their skins.

As time went on it became difficult to keep down the odour from the shed as the deep litter of shavings was not suited to such a closely build residential area. It made a great bed for the goats but the absorbing qualities were too much. A bed of uneaten grass made a better one that could be turned over regularly, but once again this was not fully successful in the built-up area. Coupled with the constant bleating I felt obliged to sell them to someone with more

room and who could look after them better.

By this time we were very attached and I could not decide whether they had in fact, originated from a cross between a monkey and a dog. You could not move in the yard lest they were chewing your clothes or with their head under your arm. Should you squat down to do anything they would climb all over you like a puppy. When trying to repair a bird cage they had damaged by pushing against the wire they were in and out of the cage knocking over nail tins and upsetting things just as I was ready to nail or whatever.

It was a sad day though, when the new owners called to collect them and it was more than just for my three year old son that I reassured him they were only going on a holiday. Now that I am hooked on goats and in particular Anglo Nubians, the days are too long till the time when I have my acres to be retrained by some more of those beautiful creatures.

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### RECIPE FOR INCENSE

Mix together 1 tbs of very fine sawdust and 1 tbs of spice or ground herb e.g. rosemary.

Then add 1 tbs of water which contains approximately 1 tsp of gum arabic (available from chemists). When all is mixed, shape into cones and allow to dry thoroughly.

*Phoenix Rising* Vol. No. 2, April 1982, Box 329, Glenelg 5045.

## Floor Polish Recipes

Several issues back we printed a request for a home-made floor polish recipe. Grass Roots readers searched through their recipe books and contributed the following tried and tested recipes. Rather than send them directly to the enquiree, we thought they would be of general interest.

\* \* \*

Grate an ounce of beeswax into a jar and pour on a cup of turpentine. Stand jar in hot water until wax dissolves.

**Lee. Qld.**

Grate 4 oz beeswax and cover with  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint of turpentine. Cover and let stand overnight. Next morning add 1 cup boiled rain water and 1 teaspoon cloudy ammonia. Keep in screw top jar. More turps can be added if a thin polish is required.

**Emmie Ramsay, Warooka, S.A.**

- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb beeswax
- $\frac{1}{4}$  lb Castile soap
- 1 oz resin
- 1 pint turpentine
- 3 large cups water

Cut up wax, soap and resin, put in saucepan and add water. Boil till thoroughly dissolved, then pour into basin, add turpentine by degrees, stirring all the time till cool, then bottle.

**Wendy Whiley, Alyangula, N.T.**

Gently melt 4 oz beeswax and when liquid stir in 1 pint of mineral or rectified turpentine. We used this mixture on all our timber shelving, benches, doors, window frames, etc. We first coated the raw timber with a 60/40 mixture of linseed oil and turpentine, then rubbed in the wax with a woollen cloth. I also give the furniture a rub down occasionally as old furniture just glows after a rub with this wax mixture. I am sure it would be an excellent floor wax.

**Anna Rando, Officer, Vic.**

Mix together  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint each of vinegar, linseed oil, turpentine substitute and clear varnish. Stir well and bottle.

**Shirley and Jan, Spit Junction.**

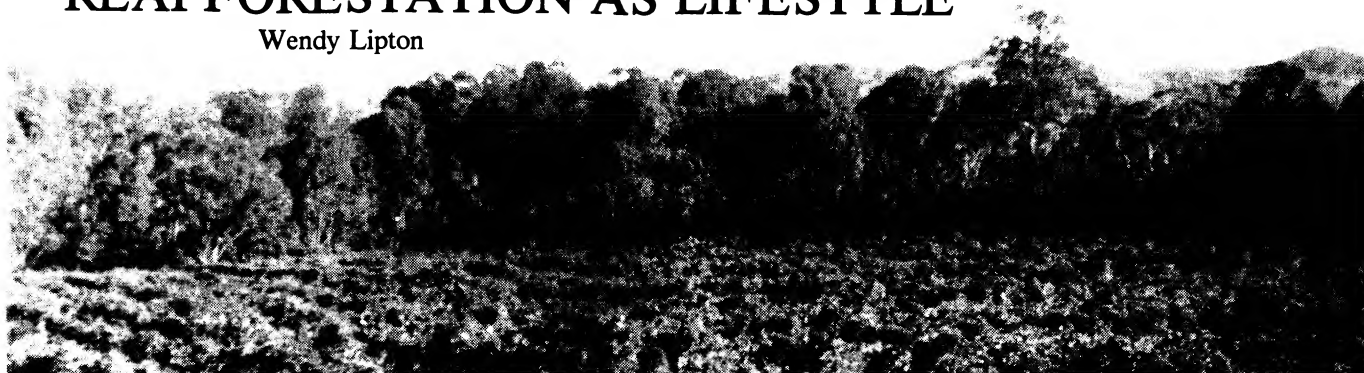
- 4 oz beeswax
- 1 pint turpentine
- 1 tablespoon cloudy ammonia
- 2 cups boiled water

Shred beeswax and pour over turps. Allow to stand overnight. In the morning stir in water and ammonia. Bottle and cork. Shake before using.

**Wendy Whiley, Alyangula, N.T.**

# REAFFORESTATION AS LIFESTYLE

Wendy Lipton



Reafforestation as lifestyle has many aspects, the most obvious one being that of actually planting trees day by day, for money. I would like however, to talk of something broader than that, something which could be considered in the realm of philosophy, but which has a very practical outcome — an alteration of consciousness. The most appropriate way of describing this philosophical attitude is by calling it tree awareness. By this I mean an understanding of and feeling for trees as having their own intrinsic worth, merely by virtue of their existence, not in terms of whatever function we see in them, be it utilitarian, as part of a delicately balanced ecology, or for aesthetic purposes. Tree awareness does not mean simply acknowledging trees' intrinsic worth — it means encouraging planting of more trees and using their bountiful gifts as thoughtfully as possible.

Tree awareness means for us all to realise that it is easy to grow most trees from seed and that growing them from cuttings is even easier. It means that when I go for a walk in the bush, in a park, even in a friend's garden I gather seeds of anything in seed and see if it will grow at home in a pot. Tree awareness means that if I chop down or cause to be logged, by buying timber, a tree or trees, I ensure that I plant or cause to be planted, trees to replace them. Tree awareness means giving existing trees the best chance of survival, so that I go to an area where there is a parent tree with many offspring all competing for a small area in which to grow and I thin them out and replant them on the edge of a forested area to encourage it to grow and spread, or on a denuded area. Thus friends can help each other as some species grow more prolifically on one piece of land and some more on another. It also involves that I find out when the Board of Works is next planning to spray along the side of the road near by, and I go and take out the endangered saplings. Or when I learn of a 'development' of bushland, I find out the name of the developer and see if I can go in before the bulldozers come and save any plants possible and tell all my friends where to come. It means too, that I am concerned that where logging occurs, it is done with care to ensure continuation of the species so the forest is not depleted of too many trees at one time — a careful selection. Thus a wide cross-section of types and ages of

trees is left behind.

One very important thing we need to do is to look closely at the ways in which we use trees:

- in construction perhaps we could use more stone and earth

- in packaging are all those paper bags and wrappings really necessary? I remember when one went shopping with a shopping bag.

- in printing the increase in 'handouts' of all kinds — advertising, information, etc. is very noticeable in recent years.

- in business, office memos are the typical example of paper extravagance.

The use of paper as a container for liquids has become very popular of late. Returnable glass bottles, involving greater effort on the part of the consumer, would save many trees and perhaps reverse the concept that containers are expendable, to be used once and discarded. Tree awareness means using both sides of a sheet of paper, if possible, and recycling paper in whichever way I can. Reafforestation does not mean just planting trees, it means looking at the ways in which we already use them — abuse them?

To me, tree awareness also means growing all types of the most healthy, vigorous trees — fruit, nut, timber, organically and without use of pesticides.

Tree awareness is making others aware of all these things wherever possible — in shops, by refusing packaging and talking of why I do so (explaining that increased use of plastics, with its heavy technology, is also unacceptable), among friends, swapping information about growing trees and in the media wherever possible.

In this way possibly a tree awareness can grow and spread its branches from these small seeds. Of course this change in awareness, this feeling for trees and their worth is a radically different one from the modern technology-conscious world of our time. I feel however, that it is time for this change in attitude to occur — for us to stop seeing trees merely as a resource. It is time for us to live in harmony with the trees, sharing the world with them.

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# THE SEARCH FOR THE GOLDEN COLOURED FLEECE

By Helen Andreoni, N.S.W.

During an exhibition in Armidale, N.S.W. organised by the Crafts Council of N.S.W., one of the organisers who had bought some of my wool at a local craft shop, asked me if I could supply her with more from the same sheep preferably with a five inch staple! Because I was shearing the next day, with great pride I brought into town this requested fleece which was quite superb — a five inch staple, pure Border-Leicester, soft, shiny grey/camel weighing nine pounds. I charged \$3.50 a pound which is a high price and I suspect that the buyer felt that she was being had. I wonder if she or other spinners or weavers or wool artists really appreciate what goes into growing top quality fleeces. More and more coloured sheep breeders are leaving the field because they are finding that the prices they get for their wool do not justify the time, expense and skill involved in producing them. Let me enlighten you using my own experience.

My only criteria in selecting and breeding sheep was the search for perfect spinning fleeces. This year, after six years of breeding, sparing no expense or effort, I have produced three such fleeces out of a flock of forty sheep and four different rams. Ridiculous you might say and I am not denying that many of the other fleeces are beautiful with a range of colours and counts which make any spinners fingers itch to use them, but perfection, that is indeed rare.

## For a Good Fleece You Need Five Components

- 1) Healthy sheep
- 2) Good pastures
- 3) Fine breeding stock
- 4) Luck
- 5) Well organised shearing and marketing.

The breeding program can fall down in any one of these areas.

## HEALTHY SHEEP

Probably the greatest battle is against worms, the plague of farm life for they pop up just everywhere. If they affect the sheep badly, the animal will get run down and there will be a break in the wool. This means as you all know, that the fleece is useless and that the whole year's growing is wasted. To prevent this happening the sheep must be checked and drenched regularly. The same danger occurs with fly-strike — in damp humid weather this means inspecting every nook and cranny of the sheep every two days. Try doing that in your spare time!

## GOOD PASTURES

If there is a drought, the quality of the feed drops off or is non-existent. Even without a drought, the pasture in winter is rarely good enough to sustain pregnant ewes without supplementary feeding. If the quality of the feed is not sustained — yes, you guessed it — the wool is broken and a year is wasted. Therefore the sheep's feed must be supplemented. Bales of good hay during this drought are currently at \$5-\$8 and one bale does not go far I can promise you. If, and it seems unreal at the moment, there is too much rain, then you have great feed but you have to keep checking their feet for footrot and other related nasties.

## FINE BREEDING STOCK

This is a much longer process. We keep four rams with four different groups of ewes. A good quality ram is worth at least \$200. Why make life so complicated you may ask — the fences alone that they require are massive. Well it has to do with genetics and the desire to continually improve the basic stock. Even if you do find the perfect ram, and I do admit that I have come close to it, you can't use him for long because you would soon run into the problems of inbreeding. You therefore have to have at least one other ram for completely different genetic stock which is of equal calibre so that your breeding programme is not going backwards. Secondly, and it must be of great relief to us all, perfection does not lie only in one direction. Some like it fine, some like it strong and about 120 other variables can be mentioned here. I have chosen to concentrate on the stronger end of the spectrum, hence my pure black Border Leicesters, but how can I ignore a pure black Tukidale when he crossed my path? Do you know that we import black carpet wool i.e. Tukidale, from Afganistan? I can just see a flock of superb Tukidale blacks perfect for all those weavers and knotters making tough springy carpets — but that vision is another six years away.

Let us return to the present. You have a good flock, sound in every way but this is only because you have culled heavily every year. Suspect genes might manifest themselves in a hundred ways — poor eyes, undershot jaw, white spots, uneven quality of wool, poor feet, prone to worms or fly-strike, throw-backs to unwanted breeds, poor mothers, too intelligent (the dogs can't cope), old age, changing colour. Having culled heavily to get a perfect flock you always seem to lose one or two either

when they are giving birth or when they are just about to and twins drain their resources (pregnancy toxemia). It always seems to be the best ewe and they die in spite of the fact that you check them night and morning during the months when births are pending.

On top of all this, if you want your fine stock to be recognised you have to attend shows all over the place dragging the most violent, recalcitrant and terrified of sheep around a tiny dusty ring. If you don't want to drag them they have to be schooled for months on end to cope with the rigours of public life.

## LUCK

Even if you have come through the previous hurdles, destiny still has to smile on you. The Great Reaper may take the form of a neighbour's dear little dog having some fun, or the foal kicking every single lamb to death, or a shooter using them as targets. All these things happen and then some. There is little you can do to protect yourself from these quirks of fate.

## SHEARING AND MARKETING

Then they have to be shorn. The going rate for a shearer to come with his machine at a date that suits your breeding programme is \$1.50 per sheep. Marketing is probably the greatest nightmare because you are dealing with single fleeces and the buyer can always be wanting one of 120 variables that you haven't bred for. Even if you try to approach the problem in a professional fashion you can still fall flat on your face. I commissioned some market research in America which does not come cheap, only to be told that the American spinner prefers machine carded tops!

What I am trying to say with this seemingly irrelevant collection of facts and experiences is that unless you are prepared to pay for quality fleeces, they are not going to be around. Few breeders will invest the time, money and skills in the field unless they receive some financial recognition but more important some reassurance that spinners and weavers are also searching for the golden fleece. I bet Penelope didn't spend her days with inferior fleeces!

Reprinted with kind permission from *B.A.C.S.B.A. News*, May 1981, the Newsletter of the Northern N.S.W. Black and Coloured Sheep Breeders Association, C/- Editor, Miss C. King, 111 Wright Street, Tamworth 2340.

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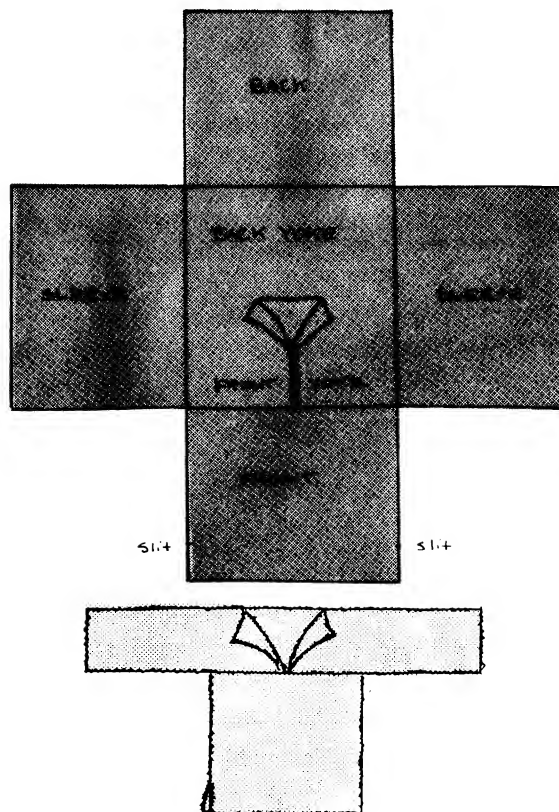
# HANDSPUN KNITTING

By Norma Johnson, Coombah, Qld.

Recently, when going through some of my back copies of *Grass Roots*, I noticed several queries regarding homespun wool. One reader found her homespun wool was inclined to stretch. This could be from not putting weights on the skeins before they dry, loose spinning, or expecting the same tension as machine spun wool.

A fine soft wool is easier to spin if held in a 'U' shape, taking a few strands from each side. The soaking before washing is also important — as wool is a natural water repellent soak for three to four hours. In the last rinse I add a few drops of eucalyptus which helps to deter the moths. Patterns are usually not much help, as I find just about everyone spins at a different strand size. Try knitting a test square and rewashing it, check size, needles, etc. From there, when you have worked out the tension, look for a pattern with the same number of stitches to the inch.

I have included a pattern for a simple jumper with either half or three quarter length sleeves. I made this up in white hand spun wool and pieced it together with brown wool crochet. The sleeves, back yoke and front yoke are in one piece. Divide at centre front, leave 2 in opening. Cast on the same number of stitches as have been cast off. Front and back panels are identical. Begin at top for these. Finally crochet the pieces together.





# The Politics of Protein

By John Seed, The Channon, N.S.W.

## SOY PRODUCTS

### Yuba

When you heat soymilk, you'll notice that a skin forms on the top. This skin is called yuba and is considered a delicacy in Japan and China. We think it's a delicacy too — simple to make and the kids love it! In its dried form, it contains a remarkable amount of protein — over 50% — one of the most concentrated natural sources of protein that there is. Ideal for back-packing.

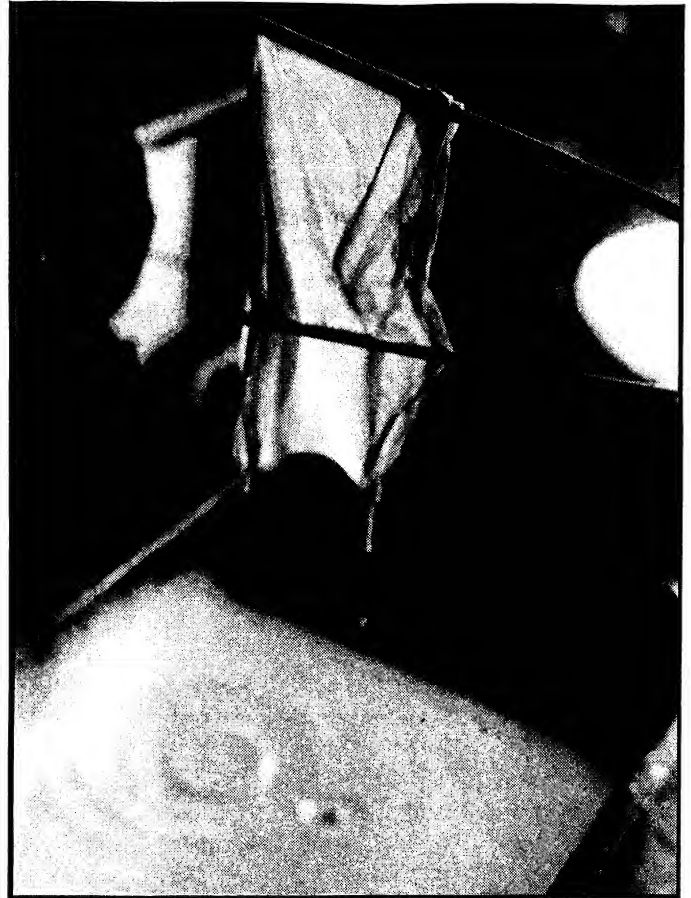
Place soymilk in a shallow pan 1½-3in deep — stainless steel or iron are good. We use an enamelled baking pan. Heat to about 175° (steaming but not boiling). After five to seven minutes, when a firm skin has formed over the entire surface, cut the skin away from the wall of the container with the tip of a knife and slip a chopstick underneath the middle of it. Carefully lift it from the soymilk, let it drip for a few seconds, then lay the chopstick across the mouth of a deep pot to let the yuba drain and cool for a couple of minutes. Exquisite to eat straight away with a dash of tamari, otherwise put aside and serve at mealtime.

In this way, the whole pot of milk is slowly transformed into yuba, with a subtle change in taste and colour at each successive layer. The last thick reddish film (*amayuba* — sweet yuba) is a real delicacy. Carefully scrape it off the spatula. As this dish takes an hour or more to make, it is best to have several containers of soymilk steaming away and to make yuba when there is other work to do in the kitchen.

Yuba may be fried, lightly salted and eaten like potato chips or used in salads, stews, soups, etc. To dry yuba, place in a warm dry place such as over a hot water heater or in a low temperature oven for 10-20 hours or until dry and crisp. Reconstitute before using by soaking in water till it is soft and pliable again.

### Soyto

In the community where we live, we often cook lunch for thirty to forty and one of the easiest and fastest ways to prepare soybeans is as soyto. Bring 12 cups of water to a rolling boil then whisk in 3 cups of coarse ground soy flour (put beans through your grinder or buy soy flour from a health food shop) sprinkling in a little at a time to prevent lumping. Lower the heat and boil gently for 20-30 minutes. Turn off the heat and gently stir in ½-¾ cup vinegar or lemon juice. When the milk has turned to curds and whey, strain through a clean cheese cloth, nylon tricot or curtain material placed in a colander. Twist the ends of the cloth to strain all the whey out. This base can be flavoured spicy or sweet. If using vinegar as curding agent, we usually spice the soyto with soy sauce, garlic, chillies,



Lifting yuba from the soy milk

herbs, a little curry perhaps, and serve on bread or to accompany grains and vegetables. If we use lemon juice, then it makes a tasty dessert with honey, dried fruits and nuts. In either case we would add half a cup of butter or margarine to the above recipe. Both this recipe and the following one were devised at The Farm in Tennessee and this is where we learnt them while working at their soy dairy.

### Soy Coffee

Roast soybeans one layer deep in a baking dish in a medium oven. Shake occasionally. When they are dark brown, grind them and store in an airtight container. Simmer one tablespoon per cup for a few minutes, then strain and serve.

### Soy Nuts

Soak beans overnight, drain well in a strainer, place one deep in an oiled baking pan and bake in a moderate oven till golden brown and crisp (usually 30-45 minutes), shaking occasionally. Store in an airtight container.

# Natural Goat Care

By Pat Coleby, Harcourt North, Victoria.

By the time this issue goes to press most of you should be in the middle of the kidding season. If you have been following my advice, pregnancy toxæmia will not have occurred. This grand name is merely another way of saying that the kids *in utero* have taken up all the available vitamins and minerals leaving little for the mother to live on. Look for increasing lethargy in the doe; this leads to eventual collapse and death if no action is taken. The best defence is seaweed meal *ad lib*, as well as the normal diet and plenty of good grazing and hay. Exercise is particularly important and if the doe is not the exercising type, get out and take her for walks! Sometimes when a doe has a great many kids and they are rather large, the food intake is necessarily limited. However, if the diet has been good and she has had ready access to the minerals she needs, a slightly lower amount of food in quantity (but not quality) will keep her going quite well. All goat homes should have glycerine in the medicine cupboard at this time of year, however good the management. For some unknown reason, it seems to be the best last minute specific if you *do* have goats with pregnancy toxæmia.

Remember to check the kids for defects such as deformed teats, jaws or abnormal sexual organs, the moment they are born. (It is much easier to dispose of them before they become a part of the family.) You should also have decided what you are going to do with buck kids by this time. It is no good starting to think about it when they have arrived! They may look endearing when small, but speaking from personal and bitter experience, by the time they are a few weeks old you often feel you could almost strangle them with your bare hands! I have met only one exception to this rule, and that was the dwarf buck kid I mentioned in an earlier article. 'Pip Squeak' has now gone to be a small child's much loved pet.

Teach your kids to lead as early as possible and dehorn them before they are three days old. Dehorn them yourself, or have them dehorned by an experienced goatkeeper and learn how to do it yourself. To test for horns, place two fingers above the eyes of the kid and try to move the skin. If it will not move, no matter how flat it is, the kid is horned. If it does move, no matter how big the bumps, it is polled.

As usual, I have had a variety of letters. One mentioned subclinical mastitis which I discussed in an article several issues back. Where this has been longstanding, the daily intake of dolomite will eventually break it down, but it can take quite a while. Unpasteurised cider vinegar, either *ad lib* or one dessertspoon a day, will help considerably. Many years ago, before I knew anything about the relationship between mastitis and dolomite, I had a doe with black mastitis. Heavy doses of drugs saved her life, but her udder was a write-off. I was allowing her plenty of cider vinegar at the time. Over the

next year eighteen large abscesses burst on the outside of her udder which progressively improved. Finally she was giving clean milk, not nearly as much as she had originally, but clean milk nonetheless.

Udder infections that have not been caught immediately can take a long time to clear up. My methods work very well with mastitis if it is spotted at once. With milk specifically for home consumption, *subclinical* mastitis is indicated by the milk going sour prematurely; there will be no 'off' taste or lumps initially. So if you find the milk failing to keep the usual ten days or so, suspect subclinical mastitis.

Another reader asks about the syndrome known as 'big knee'. There has been a great deal of uninformed panic about this particular ailment resulting, sadly, in many goats being destroyed. Over the years, there have been a number of diseases associated with big knees (and lesions in other parts of the body), mycoplasma, and several associated viral infections. In some cases that disease is present, but in these cases the goat quickly sickens and dies, often of a wasting condition. My theory is that in 90% of cases, the initial big knees are a management problem associated with the excessive intake of phosphate rich feeds, thereby depressing the calcium. I have seen kids develop this condition when fed too much milk; in this case the opposite has occurred. Unfortunately too much of certain minerals has exactly the same effect as too little, which is very muddling for the goatkeeper. So it is always sensible to enquire about an animal's diet if this condition is suspected in recently purchased stock.

Some years ago, I bought a badly dehorned buck. One of the horns grew and curled into his head and I did not realise what the trouble was until he went off his feed. The horn was in such a position that when he straightened his neck to eat, it dug into him. I cut the horn off and decided to feed him up rapidly; not usually a good idea unless you know what you are doing. I gave him as much hay and concentrates as he could eat. He put on condition quickly, but after three weeks on the diet, his knees suddenly swelled to the size of large cricket balls and were very hot. He would not even look at the feed. I immediately took him off concentrates, gave him Vitamin A and D (cod liver oil), dolomite, and grass hay. Within 24 hours his knees were back to normal. The condition neither recurred nor appeared in any of his descendants. This is an extreme case, but it shows that diet can often be the chief cause.

There are two other factors that should be taken into consideration. Copper deficiencies are far more frequent than they used to be and, in humans, one of the symptoms of copper deficiency is bursitis (swollen knees). Some years ago, I had a herd of sixteen goats blood tested to monitor the calcium, magnesium and copper levels. When considering the results, I was intrigued to find that those

with a predisposition to big knees were the goats with a low copper count, not a low calcium/magnesium count as I had expected! Since then I have ensured that my goats receive the copper they need and the condition has become a thing of the past. This would also explain why the scourge has been found more often in the coloured breeds than in the white ones; coloured goats have a greater copper requirement.

It is also well documented that the inability to absorb Vitamins A and D from the sun and green grass can be an inherited factor, carried on the X-chromosome. This explains the fact that if you do get a doe with big knees, her kids will require special care, including Pentavite and dolomite supplements for the first few months. After about a year they seem to be able to cope. Bucks with the condition do not appear to pass it on to their offspring at all.

There is a further complication! If an animal has swollen knees, and is not ailing or wasting away, you can safely assume that the condition results from poor management. Arthritis, if not already present, will probably set in. However, should the doe come in contact with any of the serious viral diseases that have been associated with this condition and she is not in full health, the disease will go to the weakest point — the knees.

I am well aware of the arguments against my theory on big knees and the condition had occurred in the herd before I realised what the predisposing factors were. I still have the descendants of those goats but not the problem.

Where it has been proved conclusively that the disease is present, the method of rearing the kids away from their mothers as recommended seems to work. Fortunately I have never had to rear kids separately, nor would I want to as I feel they require *goat's* not *cow's* milk. If this is of little interest to many readers, I must apologise, but I have already received numerous enquiries on the subject.

There are two other queries which I will deal with briefly. Firstly coccidiosis in kids. I have managed to avoid this problem more by luck than good management! I have always had mallow growing in my kid runs and only after reading Juliette de Bairacli Levy, did I discover that it is the best preventative and specific for coccidiosis. The runs are kept for the kids alone and rested for the remainder of the year which, of course, allows the mallow to grow prolifically. The second enquiry was in regard to breeding. Can you mate a doe back to her father? That depends on the purpose. If you are trying to identify a fault, to see if your sire carries it, then such inbreeding is in order, otherwise I do not recommend it. It is a fact that milk and butterfat decrease in a direct ratio to the amount of inbreeding used and we *are* trying to breed milking animals.



The advantage of the emotions is that they lead us astray.  
*Oscar Wilde.*



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# TERMITES CAN BE CHICKEN FEED

By John French  
CSIRO Division of Building Research Melbourne, Australia.

*A termite is always wrong when arguing with a chicken — Old French proverb.*



Many Ghanaian villages have granaries that are circular, of mud construction, with a suspended floor of small untreated round timbers resting on a stone foundation, which is not entirely continuous as there are small gaps in the foundation (see Fig. 1). The distance between the floor and the ground is about 150 to 230 mm (6 to 8 in). Although the termite hazard is considered to be generally three times more severe in Africa than in Australia (T.G. Wood, personal communication) these apparently termite-susceptible granaries have, in fact, a 100 per cent guaranteed 'protection plan' against termites! And without the use of any insecticides (J.E. Barnacle, personal communication). This is achieved using small, young chickens that are able to squeeze through the gaps in the stone foundations and gain access to underneath the granary. As termites move up over the rocks towards the untreated wood floor, they are readily seen and eaten by the young chickens. This is not only nutritious for the chickens, but also helps to prolong the life of timber in the

granary and, most importantly, thereby protect the grain. It may be seen as feeding your chickens with one of Mother Nature's free life-support systems!

In Australia, most chickens are reared mainly on wheat, meatmeal, barley, oats, soyabean and vitamin mixes. Grain, such as wheat and barley, are always dusted or sprayed with an insecticide when stored in silos by the Grain Elevators Board on delivery from the farmer. Only in special circumstances is insecticide-free grain sold. However, Australian chickens, like their African cousins, are very partial to a meal of termites, particularly the alate or winged castes. So I would like to describe a simple method to 'bait termites' to feed to chickens or other birds. Such a termite diet is seen as a supplement, and not a whole diet, but more importantly, live termites are insecticide free!

If you live in an area in which termites build above-ground mounds, this makes placing the 'baits' very easy. Merely place the 'bait' alongside an active termite mound.

If there are no visible above-ground mounds, but termites are found underneath fallen timber on the ground or in nearby trees, just place the 'bait' close to these sources of termites.

Steps in preparing the 'termite bait'.

1. Collect a steel drum (54 litre or 12 gal).
2. Puncture the base with several small holes (about 12 mm or 0.5 in diameter).
3. Pack drum with toilet rolls or compressed wastepaper and cardboard.
4. Add two buckets of water.
5. Dig a shallow hole alongside the base of the above-ground mound, or close to native trees infested with termites and place the drum into the hole to about a quarter of its height.
6. Pack the soil around the drum.
7. Place a lid on the drum, but make sure you can remove the lid easily. (I use cement sheeting, held in position with a brick or small rock.)
8. Allow several weeks for the termites to move into the drum and begin eating the toilet rolls or rolled up newspapers. I suggest a weekly inspection to check 'termite invasion.'
9. When termites are eating the toilet rolls, remove the rolls and tap out the termites onto a dish, and feed them to your chickens or birds.
10. Replace partly eaten rolls, plus new water-soaked rolls into the drum, and replace the lid.

Experience will tell you when to replenish the toilet rolls or papers. Also, you can vary the termites' diet by adding the occasional piece of sawn softwood or hardwood timber. The amount of termite feeding activity varies with the time of year. You may have fewer termites feeding in your baits during hot, dry periods, with an increase in activity following cooler and wetter conditions. Again, you can experiment and find out when the termites in your area are most active and what they prefer to eat. I would be most interested to learn of your 'termite baiting', so feel free to contact me.

This method of 'harvesting' termites is much less disruptive on the long term viability of termite communities than is destroying the termite colony by tearing it apart (and feeding your chickens only once), or by poisoning methods. Further, it fits neatly into the 'land ethic' philosophy so beautifully articulated by Aldo Leopold in his book *A Sand County Almanac* (1949). He was a forester, and director of the Forest Products Research Laboratory at Madison in the USA, and wrote over thirty years ago that 'we should quit thinking about decent land-use as solely an economic problem. Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise'.


So it is with sustainable termite baiting. These insects should be viewed as part of the fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals. The stability of this system is seen to be highly complex and yet an organised structure. Its functioning depends on the co-operation and competition of its diverse parts. And we are very much part of that diversity.

It seems that other Western scientists are slowly learning that chickens have uses other than being eaten. Recently chickens were used successfully as biological controls against grasshoppers in Siskiyou National Forest in Oregon, USA. (See *The Next Whole Earth Catalog*, 1980, p. 106.) Foresters, rather than applying insecticides against an unusually large hatch of grasshoppers, fenced in a 2 ha (5 acre) area containing valuable tree seedlings and stocked it with 175 chickens. At the start of the project, 200 to 600 grasshoppers per square metre were counted, but within a short time, the chickens had so reduced the grasshopper population that chicken feed had to be purchased. The message is clear. Cultural and biological controls not only avoid the need to use pesticides, but avoid and minimise economic losses. And, biological control is more than a trial that succeeds by chance.



\* \* \*

Men are so made that they can resist sound argument, and yet yield to a glance.

*Honore de Balzac.*



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# Grass Roots General Store

One of the difficulties of offering a mail order service such as Grass Roots General Store, is finding products that will fit into the size and weight limitations designated by Australia post. We realise that many readers live in isolated areas and that local stores do not always carry the specialist items that back to the land folk require. In this issue we would like to look at hand tools. Many tools are either readily available at hardware and agricultural supply stores, or are not easy to send because of freight and packing problems. However, we have selected a range which we hope will be of help.

It has been said that 'anything is easy when you know how to do it', but having the right tools will undoubtedly make any job easier. The following products are all of high quality:

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250 mm	3200 g	wedge	\$9.95

(Safety glasses should be worn when using these wedges).

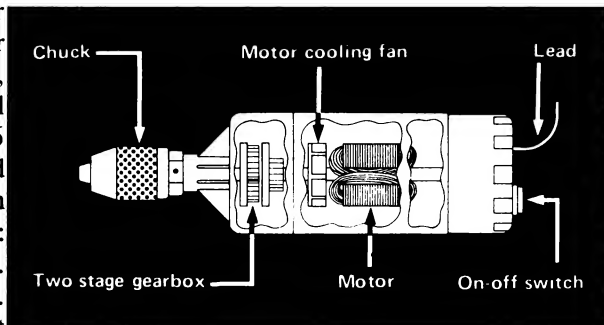
**Garden Trowel.** Cyclone Garden Trowel with 350 mm handle. \$2.95. Weight is 300 g.

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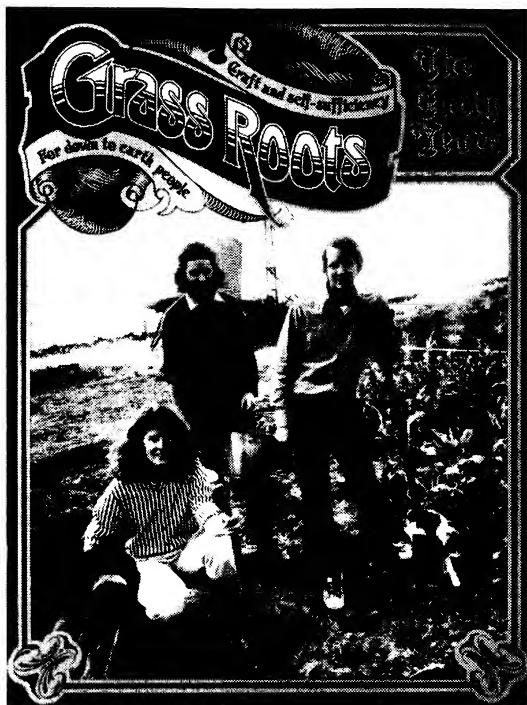


## Summary:

Hatchet		\$4.95	900 g
Timber Wedge	150 mm	\$4.95	900 g
Timber Wedge	200 mm	\$7.95	1600 g
Timber Wedge	250 mm	\$9.95	3200 g
Garden Trowel		\$2.95	300 g
Weed Fork		\$2.90	300 g
Mud Brick Mould	200 mm	\$17.95	1550 g
Mud Brick Mould	250 mm	\$17.95	1670 g
Mud Brick Mould	300 mm	\$17.95	1790 g
12V Versadrill		\$39.95	800 g

Please list the goods you require, add the weights according to the table above and calculate the postage and packing by using the table below:

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### THE EARLY YEARS

Grass Roots, craft and self-sufficiency magazine, was first published in 1973. Since that time, readers from all over the country have been sharing their enthusiasm for a more independent lifestyle and passing on the skills and know-how needed to achieve it.

This book is a reprint, by popular demand, of the first five issues of Grass Roots which have been out of print for some time. In its pages will be found an amazingly thorough collection of hard-to-find information from making sleeping bags, insect sprays or dandelion wine to training a horse to pull a jinker, knitting straight from the fleece or raising an orphan lamb. As well, because the information is from the very first issues of Grass Roots, the book contains very basic recipes and instructions for making bread, butter, cheese, yoghurt and even sandals, flutes, and wattle and daub buildings.

Although *The Early Years* is an extremely useful reference, it is more. The warm, companionable feelings of those folk trying, failing, trying again and finally succeeding shine through its pages providing the stimulation needed to make your own personal choice of lifestyle a success.

**Price \$9.50 includes post and packing.**

### THE GRASS ROOTS BUMPER BOOK

Ever wondered how to make your own presents, your own gift and greeting cards and even how to keep the children occupied during holiday periods? Well there is all that and more in *The Bumper Book*. In this special Grass Roots publication, readers have come together in a Christmas celebration and offered to share their thoughts, philosophies and ways of living in their usual jolly, straightforward fashion. There are stories about self-sufficiency in Japan, Christmas in Holland, living in a converted dairy in New Zealand, and renovating a two century old home in Wales, as well as plenty of fact and fancy on life in Australia from the outback to the semi-urban. As usual, there are plenty of activities and these include homespun slippers, knitting a teddy bear, how to create applique bags and cushions, preserving herbs, printing your own wrapping paper, making gift and greeting cards, herbal gifts, papermaking and more. As well there is a giant section of ideas, activities and resources for keeping the children occupied during the holidays. And the mechanically minded can drool over a plan for a simple 12 volt waterwheel that has been working on the owner's property for fifteen months.

*The Bumper Book* is crammed full of the joy of living. It is certainly a delight to read and one that will be recalled often.















**Price \$4.50 includes post and packing.**



**Grass Roots Binders:** these are made from tough, dark brown vinyl with a white logo. They hold 8-10 magazines as well as *The Early Years* and any of the *Companions* or *Bumper Book*. An ideal way to keep your library together and prevent the neighbours pinching your back copies. Price \$7.50, includes post and packing.

**Grass Roots Back Copies — A useful reference. All one price — \$2.50 each posted.**

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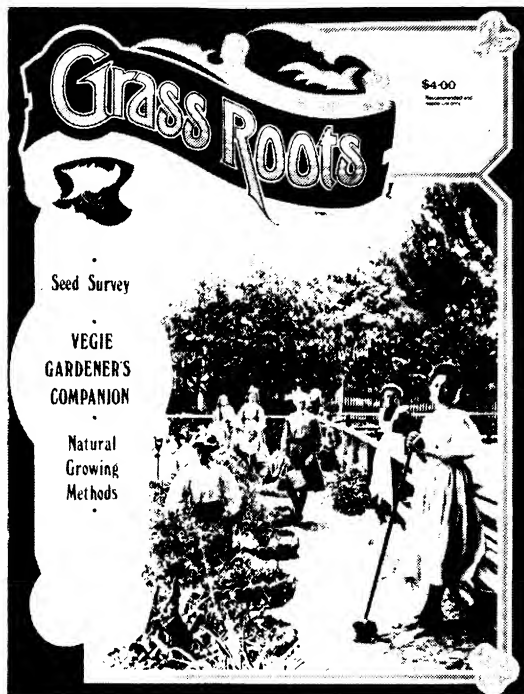
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- saving and using your own vegetable seed — techniques and problems
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There is also a survey of vegetable types and varieties whose seed is available in Australia and New Zealand. With these are detailed planting instructions which the reader can use to set out a plan of all the vegetables to be planted, when to plant them and which varieties to choose to space the crop over the season.

**Price \$4.40 includes post and packing.**

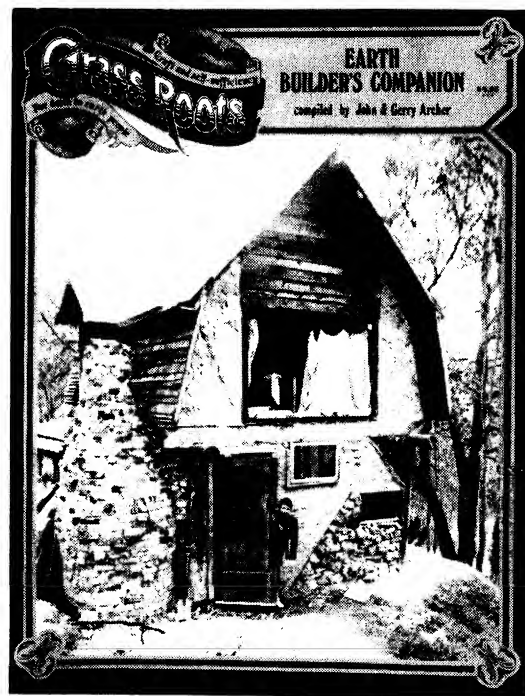
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- design — principles and application
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- councils and building regulations — how to approach them and where to go for help
- site preparation — levelling and layout
- foundations — all about concrete slabs as well as other low-cost methods
- making mud bricks — soils, sizes, methods and testing
- erecting the walls — laying bricks, different technique
- rammed earth — complete details on this method with examples of forms and modern ramming equipment
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- coatings for earth walls.

Even if you are not going to build a barn, shed or mud brick toilet yourself, here is what others are doing for perhaps half the price.

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**Grass Roots Stickers:** make new friends, let others know you are a reader; 54¢ (or two stamps) each, add 27¢ postage if not ordering with magazines.



# WORKING IN THE SHEARING INDUSTRY

By Barry Wright, S.A.

I left school twenty-three years ago and, except for a period of two years, have never had a steady job. I certainly do not feel as if I have missed out on anything. Most of these years have been spent travelling with the shearing teams as a shed hand and later as a wool-classer. In this time I have worked extensively in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria with visits to the Northern Territory and Queensland. All that and seldom working in a city or town, but out in the clean air and on uncluttered roads.

Many people think of shearers as hard rough types that would rather have a fight with you than talk to you. Characters they may be, but hard and rough they seldom are. Most are hard working, do a professional job and are honest to a point i.e. money can be left on the table in your room and it is never touched, but if you lend them money they might forget to pay it back.

There are many who buy their own farms from shearing and several have also made it into parliament, so you can see that the scope is unlimited as to where life can lead you from such a background.

Generally, a shearing year consists of a start around early February in the inland and a slowing down during mid-winter. There is still work in mid-winter but not for everybody, then a mad rush in spring in the settled areas when everyone wants their sheep shorn. By the end of November the season is drawing to a close again. Usually you can be home for Christmas with a pocket full of money.

For anyone wanting to find out what rural life is all about, working in the sheds is an excellent way. Many people on the land have been doing Grass Roots things all their lives. For instance, hot water systems at shearers' quarters are usually the wood fire under a forty-four gallon drum type as described in Grass Roots No. 8 p. 14 and No. 11 p. 21. When a lot of hot water is needed for just a few weeks of the year they are an excellent set-up.

The mechanics of the shearing industry is most interesting. A contractor agrees to shear a cockie's sheep for an amount per sheep. Out of that amount he pays the cook, shearers, shed hands, presser, woolclasser, etc. A shearer is paid only a contract rate of so much per sheep. He receives no minimum rate, so if the shearing is held up with breakdowns or wet weather he receives no pay. However, a learner shearer does have a minimum pay if he fails to shear enough sheep. Shearing is a skilled occupation and one only has to have tried to shear a sheep to realise that. Good fast shearers, the 'guns' as they are called, put their whole heart into acquiring the skill and speed to be able to shear the big tallies.

Most people learn to shear by getting a job as a shed hand and learning to shear during smokos and dinner hour. When they get a pen (a job as a shearer) they usually get to shear one hundred a day within a couple of months at the most.

A shed hand's job is to pick the fleece up after it's been shorn and throw it out on the rolling table, also to skirt the fleeces (i.e. tear off sweaty edges, stained pieces, etc.) and keep the floor clean by sweeping. If mother never taught you how to use a broom, the art is soon learned as a shed hand.

The wool is then classed and pressed into a bale. Most contractors now cart their own hydraulic press with them, which is much easier than using the manual presses. The job of presser in big sheds is also a skilled job and well paid.

The beauty of shearing shed life is that you can pick and choose what time of the year you work. You can take a job from a few days to several months. Many shearers with small farms work only a few months of the year shearing to supplement the farm income.

No qualifications are needed for shed hand work except a willingness to work well. There is no need to worry about accommodation and meals as they are both supplied. All you need is your own bedding plus an ability to do your own washing by hand.

Shearers are hard to get and good shed hands are as scarce as hen's teeth! Now I've got you all keen to try your luck in the bush, how do you get a job? A lot of shearing contractors are listed in the yellow pages at the back of the phone book. Many are listed in country directories so pick an area you'd like to visit, look up any shearing contractors, then phone or write. Good luck.

## *SHEARERS' REWARD*

*The shearer knocked at the Pearly Gate,  
His face looked worn and old,  
He meekly asked the man of fate,  
For admission to the fold.*

*'What have you done', asked Peter,  
'To seek admission here?'  
'Oh! I've worked as a shearer  
For many weary years'.*

*The Pearly Gates swing open wide,  
As Peter touched the bell,  
'Come in and take your harp', he said,  
'You've seen enough of Hell'.*

*Anon.*

# Plant Viruses

By John Mason, Lilydale, Vic.

Viruses are one of the most common, yet difficult to control problems which occur in the living world. Smallpox, polio and measles are examples of virus diseases which occur in man. The home gardener is generally less aware of the many common virus problems which are to be found amongst his plants.

Viruses are microscopic particles, usually smaller than bacteria which live inside the body of other living things, totally dependent on their host. If the host dies, so does the virus. The only way a virus can leave its host and remain alive is by entering the body of some other living thing. Some viruses are specific i.e. they will affect only one particular type of plant, while others are more general, infecting a large number of different species. The severity of a virus disorder can vary greatly, sometimes causing little more than a slight dwarfing while at other times, eventually leading to death.

## SYMPTOMS

The following symptoms can occur as a result of virus. It should be noted that it is rare that any virus would cause all the symptoms to be present at once.

### Discolouration

Part or general yellowing of leaves resulting in a mosaic, a blotching or variegation is one of the more common symptoms. Many of our commonly cultivated variegated plants are actually infected by a mild virus. Because these viruses have a minimal affect on the general vigour and because we happen to find the variegation effect attractive, these plants are continued to be cultivated as varieties of their respective species. Other things can cause yellowing apart from virus e.g. nitrogen or iron deficiencies.

### Malformation Or Distortion

Leaves can become irregular in shape, blistered and rough with rolled edges or reduced in width. Flowers are often mottled or streaked and fruits can be small, distorted in shape or streaked. Stems can also be distorted with irregular distances in the gaps between the leaves. This type of symptom is also very common.

### General Weakening

Viruses interfere with the internal workings of the plant restricting the general movement of food. Production of crops is reduced, vigour diminished and sometimes virus infected plants will suffer a premature death.

### Necrosis

Parts of the leaves die; circles, rings, streaks or stripes of dead tissue can appear usually being more prevalent in the older foliage. This effect is less common than the first three.

## Galls

Viruses along with nematodes and some other plant problems can occasionally be responsible for galls or swellings on the roots.

## INFECTION

Viruses are restricted in the way they can spread by the fact that they must remain in contact with living tissue to remain alive. Virus cannot simply blow through the air or wash through the soil in water! The main ways a plant contracts a virus are listed below.

**Insects** feed on one plant taking into their body virus from that plant. These same insects then move to another plant transferring the virus to that second plant as they feed on it. Aphis, thrip and leaf hoppers commonly spread virus this way.

**Sap contact** can occur between two plants growing very close to each other. As the stems of the plants rub together sap can transfer from one to the other taking virus with it.

**Seed Transmission.** Virus will sometimes carry in the seed of an infected plant though this does not always occur.

**Plant propagation** by vegetative means e.g. cuttings, budding, division of bulbs and layering, will transfer virus from the parent to the new plants.

**Man** can sometimes transfer virus from an infected plant to a clean plant when working in the garden. A few infected cells can transfer on a pair of secateurs or a man's hand.

## CONTROL

Virus cannot be eradicated from infected plants. If the virus is a mild one then you might choose to live with it, but if it is severe you are wiser to destroy the plant before it leads to the infection of others. The measures listed should be practised to minimise the likelihood of virus.

1. If a plant becomes infected with a severe virus problem, remove it completely and burn it — roots as well if possible. An exception to this rule would be the commonly cultivated variegated plants which are affected by more mild viruses.

2. Control insects, particularly aphis and thrip which might bring virus into your garden from outside.

3. Become aware of the varieties of plants which are more likely to suffer severe virus problems. Many native plants are rarely troubled by virus while strawberries, carnations, lettuce, potatoes, passionfruit, chrysanthemum, tulips and peaches are some of the species which suffer extensively.

4. If growing a variety of plant more likely to suffer a serious virus problem you should always start off with

seedlings or plants which are known to be free of virus or plant with a sufficient gap between plants to minimise transmission by sap contact.

5. If you suspect a virus problem in you garden keep your tools and hands clean at all times. After pruning each plant dip your secateurs into Dettol or some similar sterilising solution before proceeding to the next plant.

6. Varieties which commonly suffer severe virus problems should be cultivated for a few years only before removing and replacing with new clean plants.

7. Maintain the plant at a high level of general health so it can fight the virus disease. Feed it, water it, control other disease problems and your likelihood of the virus developing will be greatly reduced.

#### SOME COMMON VIRUS DISEASES

**Woodiness in passionfruit** is more prevalent in cooler climates i.e. Southern Victoria and Tasmania. It is usually transmitted by insects and almost certainly will affect any passionfruit after a few years. Symptoms involve gradual deterioration of whole plant, skin of fruit becomes thickened and hard and the quantity of edible flesh becomes diminished. Generally passionfruit plants are better replaced every four or five years.

**Strawberry Mosaic Virus** infects most strawberries after one or two seasons causing a dramatic decline in fruiting. Infected plants sometimes show a yellowing around leaf margins in autumn. Strawberries usually replaced with new plants after two or three seasons. Government departments control the production of 'certified' virus free plants.

**Carnations.** Great distortions of flowers and foliage are symptoms of this common disorder. Carnations, like strawberries and passionfruit, are almost certain to become infected and should be replaced with clean plants every few years.

**Daphne.** Virus problems in daphne have been researched recently in both Victoria and New Zealand. Symptoms include mild irregular streaks on the leaves, mild to severe mosaic flecks and distortion including twisting and puckering. Flowers are often distorted and reduced in both size and number. Badly affected plants are best removed and burnt.

**Lettuce Mosaic Virus.** This problem was once far more serious than today. Production of virus free lettuce seed takes place at Swan Hill, isolated from virus infected plants and under supervision of Department of Agriculture.

**Rosetting Virus of Peach.** Spring growth is restricted, laterals stunted and the space between some buds is greatly reduced or elongated. This disease can be responsible for up to 80% bud failure when budding is done using affected stock. Apart from this posing a significant problem when propagating trees, affected trees will decline and die in severe cases.

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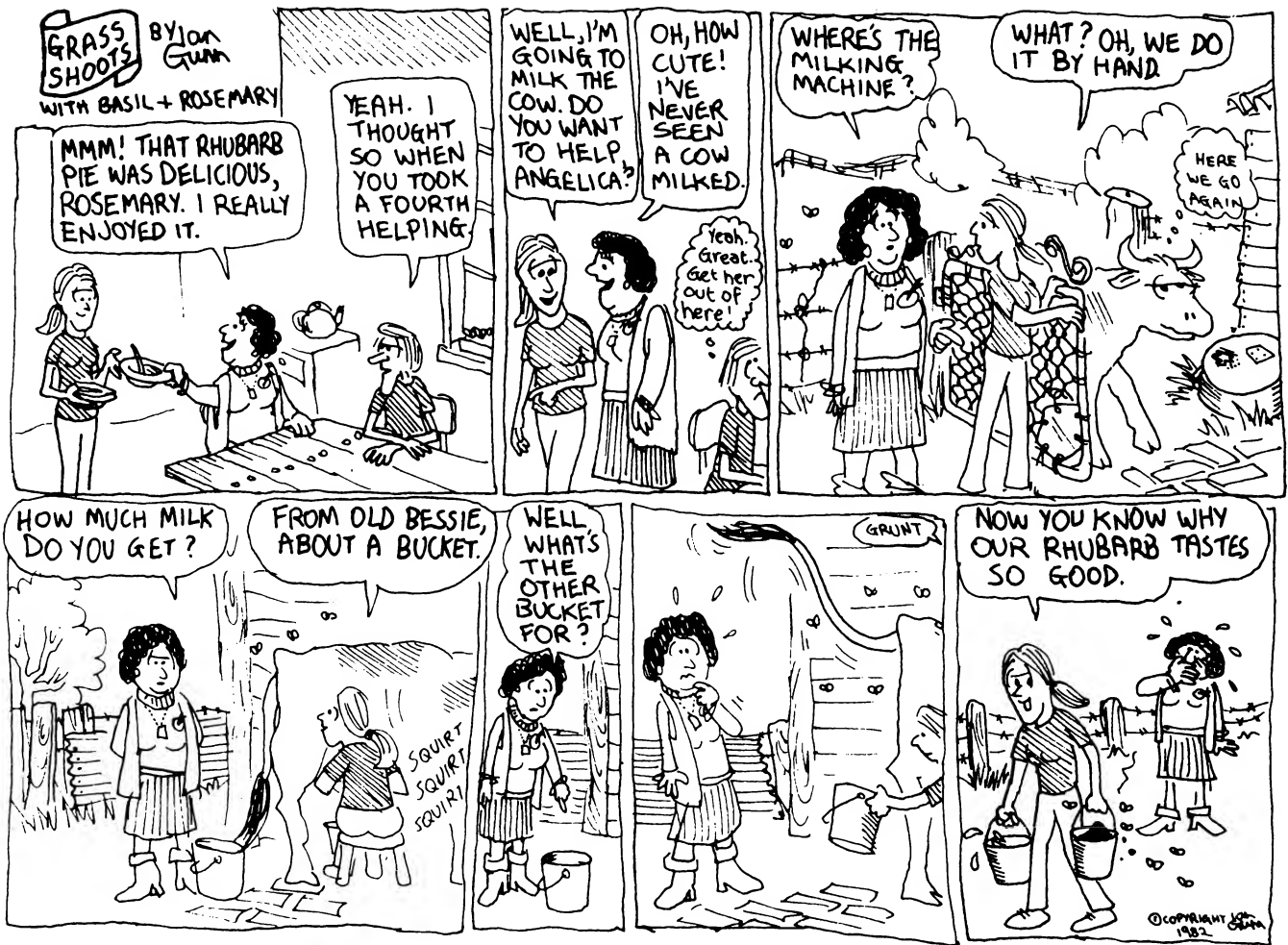
#### TO MAKE A HAPPY HOME

- 1 lb good temper
- 1 lb patience
- 2 lbs forbearance
- 1½ lbs contentment
- 3 lbs unselfishness

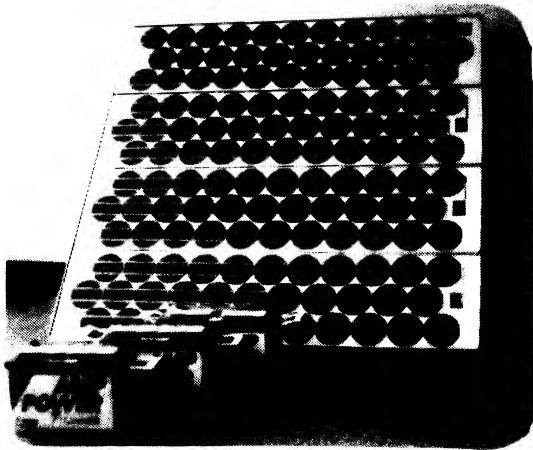
Mix well with 2 quarts of milk of human kindness.

**Dose:** 1 medicine glass full the first thing in the morning. To be repeated as soon as the effect wears off.

Reprinted from *Guild News*, April, 1982.



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# HOW TO BUILD THE PERFECT CHOOKY RUN FOR SUB-TROPICAL BUSH CONDITIONS

AND SUCCEED — ALMOST!

By Pauline Williams, Mt. Nardi, N.S.W.

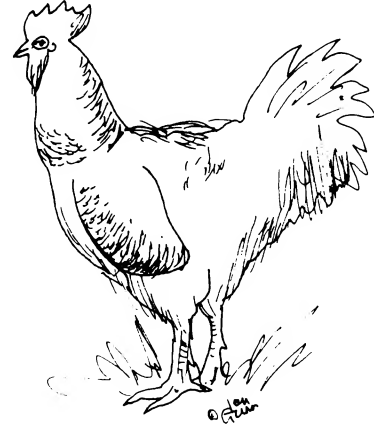
With the property and old house we bought over five years ago came an old hen-house and a harem of six middle aged hens and one young rooster-to-be — pure white, handsome and thoroughly lacking in self-confidence. Up until our arrival he had been dominated into a limbo of non-identity by a large, magnificent, blue-black rooster who unquestionably 'ruled the roost'. This beautiful creature moved away with the younger members of the harem to live with the departing owners. We knew nothing about keeping chooks and were grateful to be given some with which to start.

Our adolescent rooster we named Cecil. Dear Cecil minced and pranced about in a perfectly pansy way, seemingly not at all sure if he was a 'rooster' or a 'pooster', particularly as his attempts to crow were as ludicrously ineffective as his tentative approaches to the middle-aged 'ladies' who composed the remainder of the harem. Said middle-aged 'girls' gave Cecil sharp and disdainful brush-offs whenever he even shyly sidled near. Poor Cecil.

Howsomever, time evolves and Cecil climbed the old plum tree in the chook yard and practised his cock-crowing and eventually he could crow without a quaver, and lo! He grew tall and strong and one day a susceptible 'old girl' succumbed to his youthful strength and Cecil became a rooster after all. Indeed as tall and magnificent and self-confident a rooster as ever stalked a hen harem.

We acquired a few younger layers whom Cecil took in his stride, so to speak, and slowly we learned about chooks and their habits and health problems and broodies and chickens and so on. But we kept having problems. The old galvanised iron chook shack and adjoining chicken run kept sagging more and more despite our shoring-up repairs. Ditto the hastily erected netting around the large area designated as the temporary chook-run until we worked out the best place for it. Rats had free access to the self-feed bin and ate half the food, goannas climbed the wooden posts and dropped nonchalantly in for a feed of eggs, carpet snakes cantilevered themselves from trees just outside the run to the plum tree inside and devoured any chickens and killed hens. If young and slim enough they simply squeezed through the old large wire mesh. Land mullets took advantage of the rat tunnels undermining the walls of the hen-shack and dirt floor to eat their share of eggs. We suspected wild dogs and hawks of 'getting in for their cut' and venturesome hens climbed the plum tree, and despite wing clipping, furiously flapped their way over the sagging fence to greener pastures.

As these things happened only at intervals we continued to patch and mend and promise ourselves the chooky run would be next on the top of the priority list.



Came the day when the white ants won and the old hen shack sagged its last sag and the harem abandoned it and took to roosting in the plum tree.

This was it! 'Operation Fowl Run' hit the top of the priority list. We had visions of our flock dying of pneumonia even though it was mid-summer then. Our Department of Agriculture pamphlets had always stressed that hens must have warm dry roosts.

Within three weeks (with interruptions) we had completed the well thought out 'Perfect Hen House and Chook Run'.

All trees close outside the new fence were cut down.

The old plum tree (still inside) was drastically pruned so the hens could still use it for climbing, which they loved, without us having to erect torturous wire barriers to prevent them from high-flying it to aforementioned greener pastures. Besides, having finally established the vegetable garden in its right place and enclosed it with a fence, we could now afford to institute a late afternoon free-range binge for the harem. Not that they could 'complain' — they had a very large run for so few hens (maximum fourteen at any time). However, we did find their egg production improved with the short free-range exercise. Any longer and they wrecked the place.

The deciduous plum tree provided shade in summer, let through the sun in winter, whilst a couple of old paw-paw trees and lots of weed bushes like Paddy's Lucerne in particular (which grows tall and vigorously) provide cool leafy groves for chookies to scratch and rest under on hot days.

We used star posts only for the two metre high fence so that goannas, rats and snakes could find no purchase to climb. In case some of you are wondering, goannas cannot climb netting as their claws become caught.

For the entire perimeter of the run we used fine half inch mesh wire netting, very well bedded into the ground.



To save on cost, this was used only for the first metre in height, then for the top metre we used the normal large mesh.

The chicken run built against the new hen house and enclosed within the main run, had fine mesh on the lower half also to prevent baby chicks from squeezing through, leaving behind a frantic mum. The two metre height was roofed in with coarse netting to prevent dive bombing of vulnerable chicks by predatory birds.

Both chook and chicken runs have their permanent fresh water supply in semi-enclosed troughs with float valve system. In the case of the chicken run this water trough has a heavy gauge fine wire mesh suspended a half inch below the water level to prevent baby chick drownings. We lost a few this way too before we learnt.

The hen house was built with a concrete floor to prevent undermining by rats and scratching chooks and to collect the beautiful chookie droppings on to the dry sawdust spread beneath the roosts.

The new house is high enough to stand up in (a real hassle with the old shack) and large enough (2 x 1½ m) to house the drums of dry mal-mash (previously we had to cart it in buckets from the workshop), the self-feed bin and two or three fruit box nests. We keep approximately five old wooden fruit boxes as nests (eggs and broodies) as these can be readily removed to the chicken run (broodie and all) or taken out at regular intervals for kerosening and drying in the sun to keep them clean and sweet. We store dry grasses in chaff bags for fresh nesting material when required.

Said hen house is built of galvanised iron (with support posts *inside*) so as not to give any climbing purchase anywhere to aforementioned pests and predators. The ventilation gaps beneath the roof are wired in with fine mesh for good measure. The north wall is open to the chook yard save for a triangular piece to prevent rain from coming in onto the roosts. The only entrance to the run is the door to the hen house itself.

#### The Perfect Chook Run?

Well now. The day the hen house was finished (necessarily the last bit to be done), we had a late afternoon storm with much thunder and lightning. The very thing to drive the tree-roosting harem into their lovely new, dry, warm hen house. For three weeks the poor dears had patiently roosted in the old plum tree. Incredulity! Not only did the harem sit out the storm huddled in the plum tree — they were still there the next morning — *and* twelve months later, come hail, gale and freezing temperatures, there they still roost!!

They have never been healthier and I still grumble as I try to rake up scattered washed out droppings from underneath the tree. Mind you, should it chance to rain during the day, they take shelter in the hen house!!!

Also we must confess that two carpet snakes have got in. One I found to my bafflement, in the hen house engorged with a large chicken (just released the day before

from the confines of the chicken run). The other was found, guess where? Half way through (on its way in) the upper half of coarse wire mesh. Explanation? On that side the level of the chook yard dropped a foot below the outside ground level so that, in effect the fine mesh reached only a bare two feet above outside ground level. Just low enough to allow a slim carpet snake to rear itself up to the coarse mesh. We have added another depth of fine mesh!

Otherwise it is a matter of smug satisfaction to watch the goannas roaming frustrated around the perimeter of the run, to watch the chickens grow safely, to have thwarted the rats and the land mullets, to have healthy chooks and a higher than average egg production for the average hen age, and so much more time and energy available which was previously spent on 'Hen Harem Hassles'.

How come we have to learn good plain common sense by experience?

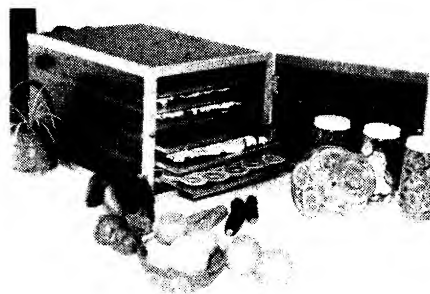
#### AN OLD ROMANY SAYING

Whatever ignorance men may show,  
from none disdainful turn,  
cause each of them does something  
know, which you have yet to learn.

Reprinted from *Mushroom* — New Zealand's alternative living magazine, P.O. Box 6098, DUNEDIN, N.Z.

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# First Aid for Fauna

## Care of Injured Birds and Orphaned Marsupials

By Yvonne Cowling, Boronia, Victoria.

When you find a native animal or bird that is injured, orphaned or both, try to assess the injury before handling. If injured, follow these directions.

### Marsupials

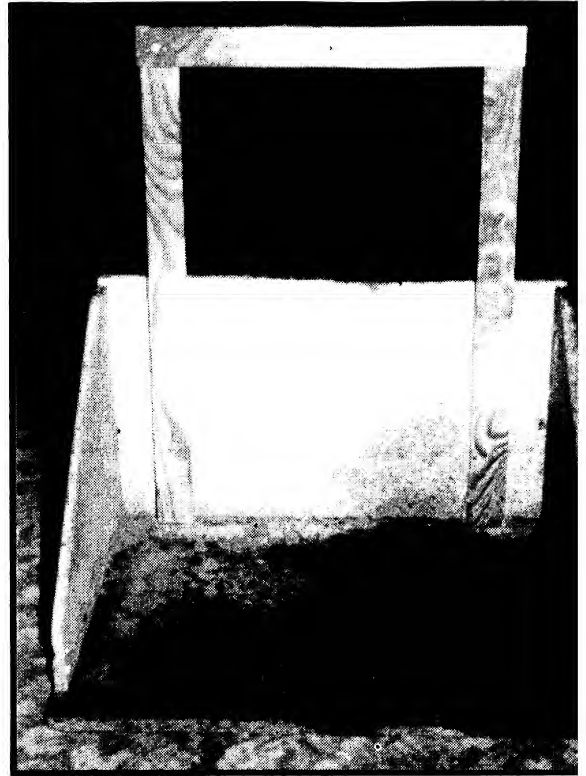
Gently place on a woollen jumper, put in a well padded box in a dark place and apply some form of artificial warmth at body temperature to ease shock. Handle as little as possible until you can get veterinary advice. If an orphan joey, place in a pouch and apply artificial warmth as young animals cannot maintain body heat and always use pure wool — jumpers are perfect. A woollen sock is ideal for a baby possum.

### Injured Birds

Keep the bird still to prevent further injury. Minimise shock by keeping the bird in a warm dark place. A small well padded box is ideal, otherwise roll the victim up in a towel (see p.64). Seek advice from your local veterinarian. If unable to obtain help, try to identify the problem. If it has a broken wing, the fractured ends of the bone can be felt by gently manipulating each long bone between the fingers. Secure the wing to the body of the bird with a gentle adhesive-like cello tape, or, using a light splint of wood or cardboard, tie the fractured bone to this. Keep the joint still for three to four weeks, then remove the strapping.

Keep all feeding equipment and bedding very clean as raising a baby bird or animal is no different from a human infant. All baby animals need to be defecated by gently stroking a tissue across the cloaca until droppings and urine are passed. This must be done before each feed. Stand a joey on newspaper to defecate and he will toilet train himself for when he is old enough to get in and out of the pouch on his own.

The most successful formula for possums is 50 ml Bear Brand Evaporated Milk with 50 ml boiled water and 1 teaspoon Complan. Gradually build up over a period of days, to a 50-50 strength or scouring may occur. When you start giving solid food like rose petals, bread, fruit, gradually start to wean him off milk over a six week period. He will be getting enough vitamins and minerals naturally. As the possum grows, encourage him to be inquisitive and provide as big an area as possible in which he may exercise. Give him new gum leaves and branches every day, vary the types as much as possible as it will establish tastes for when he leaves you. Do not just set him free in the bush as he will starve to death. Always provide a tree house near people who will put out some food each



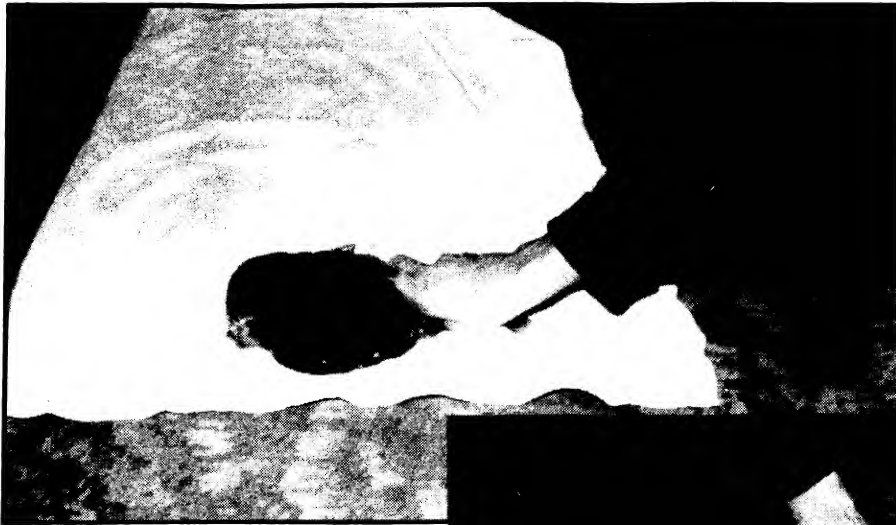
Bare frame for supporting kanga pouch.



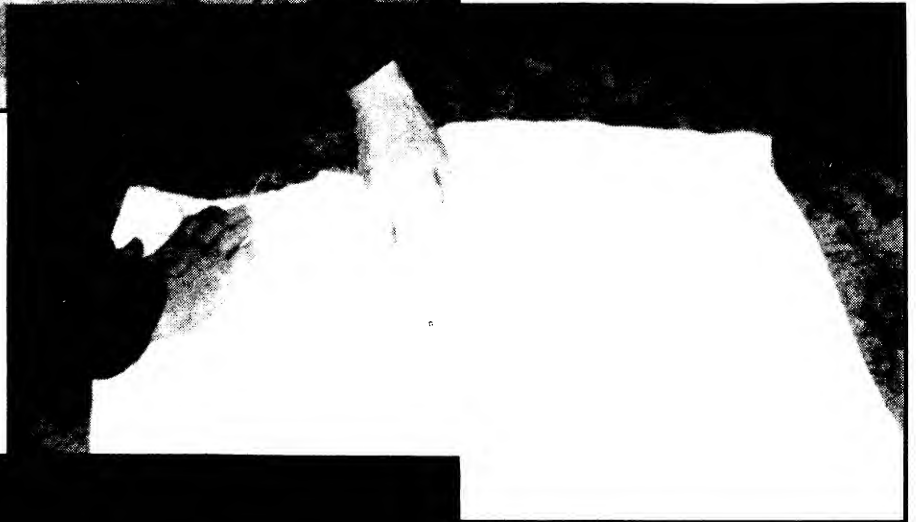
Cover frame with a larger pouch. Pin pouch with joey to this.

## PROTECTING AN INJURED BIRD

1. Secure bird by holding wings and place face down on cloth, firmly but gently.



2. Fold end of cloth over back and head of bird. Covering the head entirely is important.



3. Roll bird firmly in remaining cloth.



4. The bird cannot see to panic, so will not struggle and will travel quite comfortably. He cannot flap to injure himself further.



night until he finds natural food sources and his independence.

I would like to say a little about our Australian marsupials. They are unique in this world as they leave the birth canal at an embryonic stage. No other living creature could live from this stage outside the womb, so very specialised care is needed. Please do not feed or do anything you are not sure of — ring us and ask if in doubt. Many joeys die terrible deaths because well-meaning people who do not know but think they are doing the right thing, are slowly killing them, so please seek advice.

We do not recommend cow's milk as scouring and death results. However, remarkable success has been achieved with Digestalact. This can be obtained from the chemist or we can supply it and send it via Vic. Rail if contacted as soon as possible. Four teaspoons Digestalact to 50 ml boiled water is a good strength to be started on straight away. Digestalact has *all* the vitamins and minerals added that are necessary. It is a no fuss preparation.

We are aware that many joeys have been reared on cow's milk but on checking, you will find that in such cases, the joeys were fully furred and their stomach flora was fully established. If you were able to compile accurate figures, the numbers of joeys dying while on cow's milk would be far greater. A guide to rearing joeys which Mr. Geoff Smith of Sydney has very kindly supplied is an invaluable reference.

Patience, love and lots of time are needed. Be prepared to give it generously and you will be rewarded tenfold with a happy and responsive animal. If you do not, you will

stress him and an unhappy and sick joey will be the result. Remember too, that a one to one relationship must be established with one foster mum for feeding.

Geoff Smith makes perfect kangaroo feeding nipples for 50 cents each, including postage. Please use them as they are long and slender like a kangaroo's, and you will not have a joey with a sore mouth. The nipples fit perfectly over a Pet Nip nursing bottle. Mr. Smith's address is 15 O'Shanassy Road, Mt. Pritchard 2170.

There are registered shelter people who work voluntarily for the Fisheries and Wildlife Division of the Ministry for Conservation. They raise and rehabilitate animals and birds and have very kindly consented to having their names and telephone numbers published. As they understand the very special needs marsupials have, they will be happy to answer any enquiries. For people interstate who need advice or help, ring their state wildlife division for names and telephone numbers of people doing this work.

Mrs. A Troy  
758-1635 (Bird Enquiries and Wildlife)  
Mrs. Y. Cowling  
762-3803 (Wildlife and Digestalact)  
Mrs. D. Light  
057-721-692 (Kangaroos and Digestalact)  
Mrs. T. Lehrmann  
052-542-484 (Wildlife including Koalas)  
Mrs. P. Eton  
059-786-224 (Wildlife)  
Mr. G. Briggs (Bimbimie Wildlife Park)  
059-427-238.



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## PROPAGATING SEEDS

For those who have not already thought of it, a very effective way of propagating seeds, especially those with a long tap root is to make further use of those old newspapers and roll sections of newspapers into a tube. Then secure the tubes with two or three pieces of twine.



Make up about ten or twelve tubes and place them into two gallon black plastic planter bag, use enough tubes to ensure their security, then cut the base from another planter bag and slide it carefully over the remaining exposed area of tube. Secure these with twine and fill the tubes with good earth and plant your seeds.



When it is time to transplant them to their permanent spot, there is no need to disturb the root system just lower the tube in tap root and all.

Reprinted from P.A.W.A. Newsletter Vol 4  
No. 2, P.O. Box 43, Subiaco 6008.



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# Poetry

## WISDOM FROM A TREE

*Like a seed meeting soil,  
so were our lives conceived.  
Just as the new shoot emerged from the earth,  
so were we born into the world.  
The young sapling braved many harsh storms and basked in  
many a sunny day, gradually learning to live in harmony  
with the changing seasons.  
Our exciting and adventurous childhoods taught us many of  
the essential lessons of life.  
Now the sapling is a young tree,  
now we are young men and women.  
The tree, as it grows, will branch profusely in all directions,  
so should we branch out with many limbs of knowledge and  
experience.  
The tree, will bend with the wind, but if a branch should break,  
the tree is still a tree.  
So should we remember to regard each of our branches with  
equal importance, so we remain stable through the heaviest  
storm.  
A bird may make its home in a branch of the tree, and the tree  
will be happy to share company with the bird.  
Such are the joys of young love.  
As the seasons change, the bird will leave, but the tree will still  
be a tree.  
So should we enjoy love when it comes our way, and allow it to  
go when the time comes.  
The tree never laments over leaves lost, nor does it eagerly  
await the coming of spring; the tree just lives.  
So should we remember that we only have the eternal present  
moment in which to live.  
The tree is young and has many fulfilling years ahead of it,  
so should we make the most of our youth.  
But who is to say when the tree is complete? Each year it grows  
a little more and becomes more majestic.  
We will never become perfect men or women, but we should  
become more whole with each new day.  
One day the tree will peacefully and willingly die, returning to  
the earth.  
So too should we return to whence we came, happy that we have  
lived our lives.*

Stephen Fisher.

## ENTITY

*I am life  
I possess energies potential for life  
I control it in what I do and say  
I am life itself  
No-one feels as I feel  
No-one sees as I see  
I am an entity, a unique entity  
Me  
Myself  
And I.*

Patrice Jamieson.

*This afternoon  
I held a kid  
and  
as I held it  
I felt its heartbeat  
weaken  
flutter  
die  
The poor thing  
It didn't belong to itself  
It was owned by us  
It couldn't roam on whim  
It only roamed inside  
our barbed wire boundaries  
or the knackery stockyards  
I'm glad it died in my arms  
with someone who could appreciate  
the wealth it brought in living  
and the joy it gave in  
growing up  
playing  
exploring  
Not the wealth in gold.*

B. Drury.

*In the garden where I once grew,  
You'd come and look at me, just you.  
And when you thought the time was right  
You came and picked me one moonlite night.  
Now I see you everyday,  
Please don't ever throw me away.*

George Waring.





### UPSHOT

*Everyone must bear his burden.  
If you haven't got one, then  
We'll give you one.*

*That little boy who gambols with  
A Labrador at dusk, shouts  
'Look Mum, he loves me, look!'  
Will learn to grow a thicker skin,  
Keep the cave spotless and rebuild  
His reputation daily. Daily he  
Will pat the dog and hurry on.*

*That sand dune where the banksias  
Grappled with an on-shore breeze,  
Suffers festering concrete sores:  
Flush toilets supersede the swamp,  
Cascading neon lights the stars  
And steel-jawed angles grace a sky-  
Line with the elegance of corpses.*

*That Rubens lady trailing wisps  
Diaphanous with goatish satyrs  
Puddling in her fulsomeness,  
Recoils, complies with decency,  
Dry-cleans the curtains, joins a  
Mothers' club and holds four aces  
In a room where nothing moves.*

*Far down the beach, their shy eyes  
Falter by the dawdling waves:  
'You are what I want.' But more's  
Expected, so he joins a war  
In aid of profiteering scum  
And leaks his blood for bullets  
While she frets her passion dumb.*

*Life isn't meant to be easy. No.  
The powerful make sure of that,  
Imposing ugliness.*

*Peter Pulsford.*

*As you cast your eyes  
upon this written rune,  
Seek not fear or favour  
read no doom or boon,  
Rather look and see  
that once in the doing,  
We forget how to be.*

*N.J. Ashton.*

### SHE LIVES ALONE

*The garden is her natural habitat  
where she moves  
light as a leaf,  
though her skin looks old  
as the thick-trunked camellia  
dipping above her.  
Violent love  
flashes in her eyes –  
too strong for ordinary folk.  
Her voice,  
uncomfortably clear,  
frightens the visitor,  
stopping by for small-talk  
yet receiving poetry.*

*Margaret Packham Hargrave.*



# Kids Pages

**Dear Meg and David,**

My name is Tina Sullivan and I am nine years old. I live on a farm in Manildra, N.S.W. I would like a pen friend about my age. Mum and I enjoy reading Grass Roots magazine.

**Tina Sullivan,  
Belluve,  
Molong Road,  
MANILDRA 2865.**

**Dear Meg and David,**

I am eleven years old and live on a farm. I like roller skating, disco dancing, building cubby houses, cooking, gardening and television. I collect stamps, coins, rocks and shells. I like reading Grass Roots magazine because it is interesting. I have a few pets – Amber the goat, Scamper the dog, Founder the cat and Strawberry Shortcake the lamb. My favourite animals are horses, dogs, cats and goats. I hope I can get a pen friend.

**Sharon Sullivan,  
Belluve,  
Molong Road,  
MANILDRA 2865.**

**Dear Grassroots,**

I would like a pen pal from anywhere. I am a twelve year old girl. My hobbies are cooking, reading, drawing and having fun. I will write to anyone who writes to me. I live in town but would love to have a farm and I love all animals, especially cats, dogs, elephants and native animals.

**Kylie Dominick,  
288 Edward Street,  
WAGGA WAGGA 2650.**

**Dear Mr. & Mrs. Miller,**

I am eight years old and I would like to tell you about my duckling who is three and a half months old. He is a funny little thing because every time I try to catch him he runs through my legs. That's why his name is Speedie Gonzalas. I had another pet before him but we think she drowned because when we found her she was in the water bucket. This one is special because it was born at home. My favourite hobby is driving the tractor with my dad. My duckling has some other friends as we have sixteen hens and one rooster, one goat who is about to have babies and five geese.

**Michael Jenkins,  
R.S.D.,  
Gienioth  
via WYCHEPROOF 3527.**

**Dear Grass Roots Readers,**

My name is Jane and I am ten years old. I would like a pen pal on a farm. I love roller skating and playing records. I love animals and I would like to live on a farm. I learn French at my school and my favourite French song is *Un N'Haricot Dans l'oreille*. I don't like maths much. I

get to school by train. I go through eight stations, then catch a bus. I love Grass Roots.

**Jane Spoore,  
3 The Boulevard,  
WARRIMOO 2775.**

**Dear Meg & David,**

I am ten years old and live in Mount Evelyn, Vic. We have canaries, finches, quail and nineteen chooks. We also have two cats Miggie and Bumpy and two dogs Pud and Bengy. I would like a pen friend in Victoria. My hobbies are stamps, coins, books and netball. I would like a donkey joke.

**Amanda Brinksma,  
38 Railway Road,  
MOUNT EVELYN 3796.**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

I am nine years old and would like to be a pen pal. I am interested in horses and other animals. We have two goats and about fifteen chickens. I have a sister who has just turned eight. I am a book worm and enjoy reading mystery books and like riding my bike and swimming.

**Kellie Riddett,  
4 Reid Place,  
KAMBAH 2902.**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

I am six years old. I would like a girl pen friend the same age as I am. I will be seven at the end of the year. Thank you.

**Shane Joyce,  
P.O. Box 233,  
PANNAWONICA 6716.**



## COOK'S CORNER

### CHOCOLATE CRUNCH

1 cup wholemeal S.R. flour  
½ cup raw sugar  
1 cup coconut  
125 g butter  
1 tbsp carob

Melt butter and pour into ingredients. When mixed press into dish and bake at 180°C for 12-15 minutes. When cool ice with carob icing and sprinkle with coconut.

**Amanda Brinksma.**

### PEANUT BALLS

½ cup peanut paste  
½ cup honey  
½ cup sunflower seeds (ground in blender)  
½ cup walnuts chopped  
½ cup wheat germ

Mix together (the children enjoy helping). Shape into balls. Roll in coconut. Keep refrigerated.

**Pam Hainsworth.**

What sits in the oven and sings?

An Elton Scone.

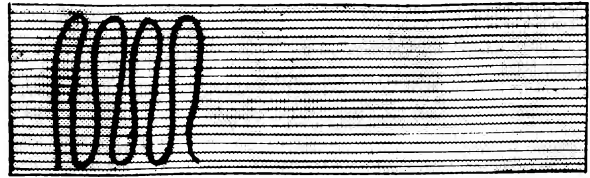
## WEAVE A BOOKMARK

By Lynette Pukallas

- A bookmark is an easy project to start off with.
- Cut out a piece of strong cardboard 15 cm by 10 cm across.
- Using a pencil mark off in 1 cm. Cut a little nick then wind the warp around. Use thick yarn for the warp (14 ply).
- Make a shuttle from cardboard, a broken ruler or wood. Fill with about half a metre of wool.
- Starting a little in, weave across the width of card

over one strand, then under the next strand repeatedly. Try not to pull the work in too much.

- To remove weaving from card, turn over, snip the warp strands across the middle of the card and knot to stop unravelling. Trim the fringe to whatever length you wish.



## PLANT A TREE

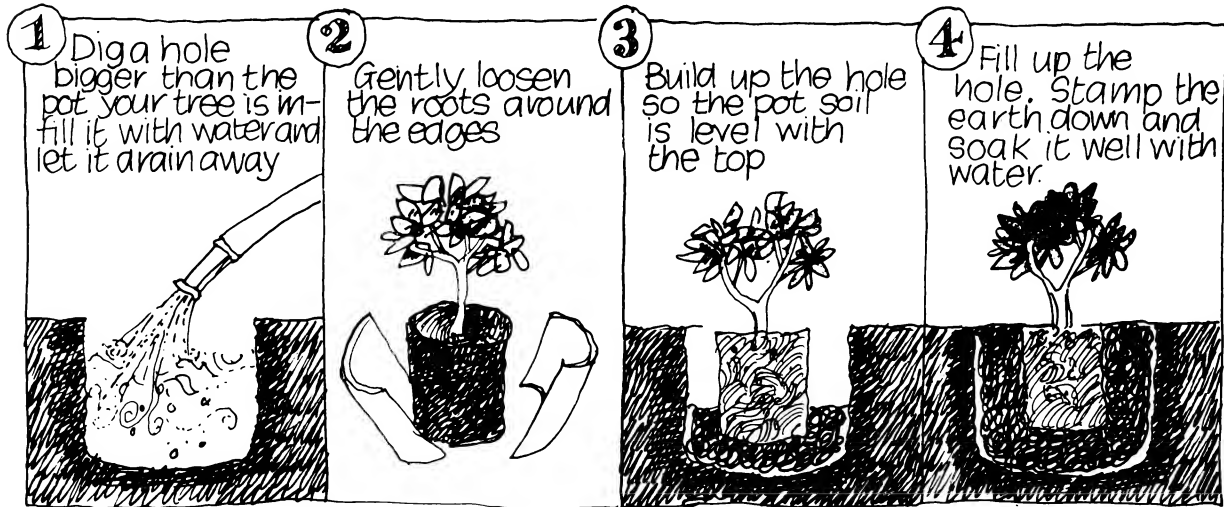
It is a good feeling to have your own tree. It can be grown in a large tub or planted in a garden. It is best to buy a young tree in a pot from a plant nursery — maybe you could ask for one for a present.

The tree you choose to plant will depend on many things like the climate and the soil where you live. Work out how much space you have — in a very few years some trees grow tall and spreading. It would be sad to have to chop your tree down.

Some trees have always grown in your part of the world. These are called native trees. The rest were brought in from other countries long ago. If you plant a native tree that flowers, you will find native birds will come to your garden. This is a good thing to do in cities where most native trees have been cut down.

Water the ground around your tree regularly and give it a soaking in hot weather. Trees in tubs cannot spread their roots in search of food and water as they can in the ground. Keep the soil damp and add some fertilizer to make it rich. Buy the kind that is right for your tree and read the label first.

Reprinted from *Gardening – How To Grow Things*, Practical Puffin No. 2 In a Series, Published by Penguin Books, Aust. Ltd. 1976.



## ANIMALS

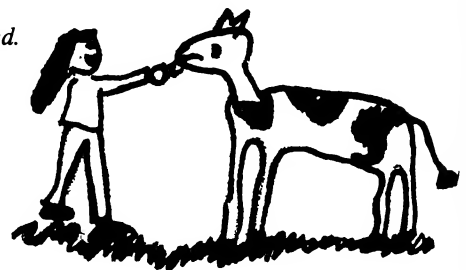
*In the animal sheds today,  
Two little puppies decide to play.  
A horse kicks a man in red.  
A bird falls and it lies dead.*

*A cow mooes at the men.  
The judges look at a hen.  
And a pig grunts at a horse,  
As it goes quietly round the course.*

*A pig and a sheep make friends,  
But soon their friendship has to end.  
The horse neighs and pigs grunt,  
As the keeper brings them lunch.*

*A rooster crows about his crest  
But the judge thinks he's not best.  
A sheep baas about his food  
And a bull gets in a bad mood.*

Stephen Hodges.



# While the Billy Boils.....

*How to eat is as important as what to eat. Therefore eat regularly, calmly, in a pleasant place. Chew thoroughly and avoid overeating. Good food — prepared with love and eaten with gratitude — is the source of life, the foundation of health and the gateway to spiritual unfoldment.*

*Fred Rohe.*

While the Billy Boils is a regular part of Grass Roots and hopefully will spare you all the frantic hysteria of searching for a recipe you *know* is somewhere amongst the Feedback pages. If you have any favourite wholefood recipes for utilising surplus garden and orchard produce, or nutritious cake or bread recipes or even cookery hints, then send them in. We would all love to read them and try them out.

## MILLET PORRIDGE

Millet is supposed to be the most nutritious cereal. I do not know if that is correct but at least it is very tasty. This amount is for two people.

- ½ cup hulled millet
- 2 cups water
- ¼ cup powdered skim milk
- Honey to taste
- Few dried apricots

Soak millet and apricots overnight in water. In morning, add milk and honey and simmer for 10 minutes. Let stand another few minutes. Eat and enjoy.

**Cathi Matilda, Toowong.**

## BRAN MUFFINS

- 2 cups bran
- 1 cup W/M flour
- 1 egg
- Pinch salt
- ¾ cup honey
- 1 tsp bi-carb of soda
- 2 tbs butter
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 mashed banana or 1 grated apple

Melt butter, add honey and stir till soft. Remove from heat and beat egg into the mixture. Pour this syrup into a hole in the middle of all dry ingredients. Mix. Add banana. Put in greased muffin tins. Bake in moderate oven about 20-30 minutes. They keep well frozen and are nice reheated.

**Rob & Ngaire Shorter, Kyneton.**

## HOMEMADE MUSTARD

- 125 g (4 oz) mustard seeds (available at supermarkets or health food stores)
- 15 g (½ oz) whole black peppercorns
- ½ cup white wine
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 1 cup olive oil
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- 2 teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon sugar

Place all ingredients in basin and mix well. Cover and leave overnight. Now put about half ingredients into blender and mix for approx. half a minute, then add remainder. The mix becomes rather heavy so it is usually necessary to stop mixer and scrape down frequently. This makes about 2 cupfuls. If a smooth mustard is preferred the mix may be pushed through a sieve and

you end up with a lesser amount. Now fill into sterilised jars, seal, let stand for approx. one week. Keep refrigerated once opened.

**Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island.**

## MUSTARD

- 1 cup mustard seed (optional grind or blend medium fine)
- 2 tbs black peppercorns ground medium fine
- 2 tbs chopped fresh basil or tarragon (1 tbs if using dried herbs)
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 cup wine vinegar
- 1 cup white wine
- 1½ tbs salt
- 1 tbs brown sugar

Stir the mixture well and leave tightly covered for 24 hours by which time the mixture will be absorbed.

## HOMEMADE CURRY POWDER

I would like to pass on to you my recipe for homemade curry which is far superior but more delicate than commercial curry and may be varied according to taste.

- 1 oz coriander seeds
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tbs ground cumin
- ¼ tsp powdered saffron
- 2 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp ground allspice (ground pimento berry)
- 1 tbs salt
- 1 tbs ground black peppercorns
- ½ tsp mustard seed
- Pinch of ground cloves

Grind all in a pepper mill or blender and bottle.

**Anne Ralston, Burnie.**

## BREAD

Into 2 cups warm unsalted potato water mix 1 tbs yeast and 1 tbs sugar then 1 cup sifted flour. Place in a jar (large) and leave overnight in a warm place. In a bowl mix 8 cups flour, 2 tbs sugar, 1 tbs salt, making a well in the centre. Add yeast mixture and 2 cups warm water. Mix and knead thoroughly. Set aside for 2 hours in large cooking tin, then bake at 200°C for 1 hour. Remove from tin and wrap in damp cloth. Yum!

**Fiona & Barbara Bowker.**

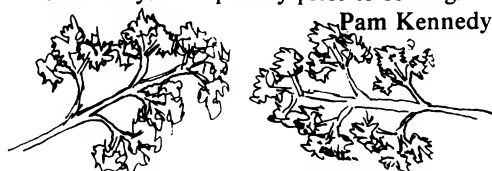
### CELERY SOUP

(30 min cooking time)

- 1 cup celery
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup W/M plain flour
- 2 pints cold chicken stock
- 1½ cups milk
- Dash nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon dried chervil
- ¼ teaspoon white pepper
- 2 teaspoons grated onion
- Salt to taste
- Parsley

Cook the chopped celery in butter until crisp but tender. Add flour and 1 pint of stock. Cook, while stirring constantly until sauce boils for one minute. Stir milk into remaining stock, add to celery mixture along with nutmeg, chervil, pepper, salt, onion and heat slowly. Add parsley prior to serving.

Pam Kennedy, Ringwood.



### CHEESE AND VEGETABLE BAKE

- ½ cup plain flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese or cottage cheese
- 4 eggs well beaten
- ¼ cup (60 ml) milk
- 2 oz (60 g) melted butter
- 1 medium onion
- 2 medium potatoes
- 1 small carrot, parsnip or choko

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Lightly grease casserole dish. Sift first two ingredients into large bowl.
3. Stir in cheese, eggs, milk and melted butter.
4. Grate onion right into mixture to stop darkening. Grate potato and carrot into mixture. Stir to combine.
5. Pour into casserole and place casserole in pan containing 1 in (2 cm) of water. Bake in oven, uncovered, for 1½ hours.

Very nice served with onion gravy. We also enjoyed it with tomato sauce.

Barbara Warren, Ballarat.

### PEANUT RISsoles

- 8 oz crushed peanuts
- 3 medium potatoes, mashed
- 1 oz butter
- 2 onions, fried
- 2 tbs oil
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- Breadcrumbs/wheatgerm
- Tahini

Mash potatoes with butter. Fry onions. Add nuts, nutmeg and a pinch of salt. Combine potato with heated mixture. Stir in about 2 tbs tahini and shape into rissoles. Coat with breadcrumbs and fry lightly.

Barbara Griffiths

### TASTY PIE

- One 8 in wholemeal pie crust (baked)
- ¼ small cabbage (shredded)
- ½ capsicum
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 1 medium onion
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Sweet basil
- ¼ medium pumpkin (butternut)
- 1 medium potato
- 1½ tbs honey

To the pie crust add the combined mashed potato, pumpkin and honey (butter or milk may be added) spoon in and cover edges. Place combined cabbage (raw), capsicum, onion and tomato on top, then grated cheese and sprinkle with plenty of sweet basil. Put in moderate oven for 15 min then serve.

Val and Larry Mayes, Cairns.

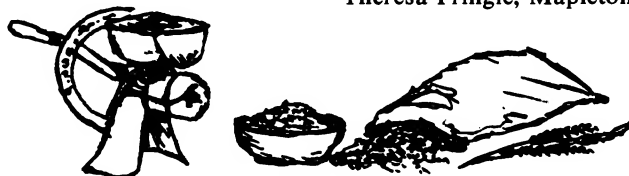
### PERSIMMON SLICE

As well as slicing and eating persimmons with ice-cream or custard, we have found the following recipe very enjoyable.

- 250 g margarine (melted)
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups persimmon pulp
- 2 tsp pure vanilla essence
- 4 cups W/M flour
- 2 tsp soda
- ½ tsp each of cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and salt
- 2 cups sultanas
- 2 cups walnuts (optional)

Mix all ingredients, spread on trays and bake in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes. This makes a moist, tasty slice.

Theresa Pringle, Mapleton.



### SULTANA CAKE

- 750 g (1½ lb) sultanas
- 1¾ cups boiling water
- ½ cup orange juice
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- 1 tbs grated orange rind
- ½ cup oil
- 1 cup soy flour
- 1¾ cups W/M S.R. flour
- ½ tsp salt

Cover sultanas with the boiling water, soak for 1 hour; add orange juice. Beat egg yolks and sugar together until light and creamy. Add orange rind, add oil gradually; beat well. Add sifted flours and salt alternately with undrained sultanas; mix well. Fold in firmly beaten egg whites. Place mixture into a greased deep 20 cm (8 in) square cake tin lined with greased greaseproof paper. Bake in moderately slow oven 1½ to 2 hours or until cooked when tested.

Chris Ernst, Murchison.



# OUTBACK DIARY

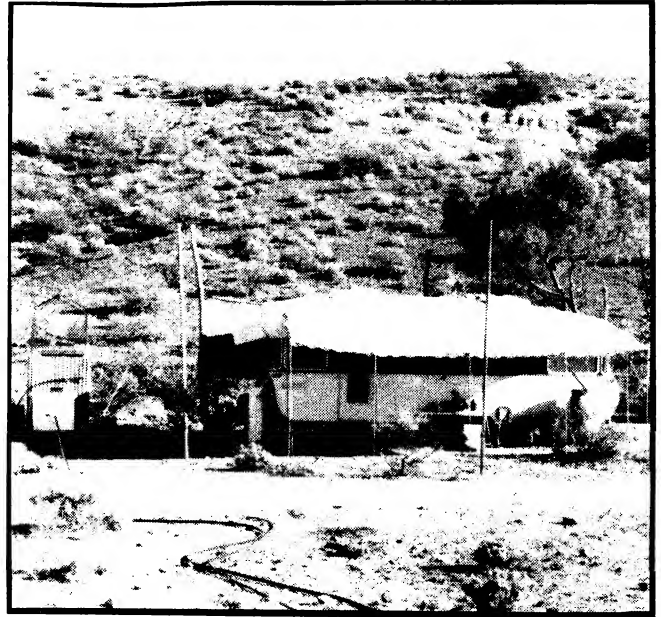
By Maureen Wright, S.A.

Building a house in the country on a bush block is one of our future projects. By the time we find the land we want and the money with which to buy it, we're hoping we won't be too old to do the building ourselves, or at least some of it. We've now lived in a lot of different areas — city, town and outback — and learned that the difficulties of getting a power supply established will be the first problem we'll need to overcome. We have had experience with mains power, generators, 32 volt, 20 volt and 240 volt systems. There is no doubt that a mains supply of 240 volts available to a house or block is the most convenient. But what if that is not available? Many country people have to consider the alternatives.

Ours is a temporary mining camp far from any regular power supply, so we must provide our own. For the two of us we have a caravan which needs power for lights (either 240 volt AC or 12 volt DC) and gas for the stove and refrigerator. We own a 600 watt generator which supplies 240 volt power and this will run six 100 watt light globes (or twelve 50 watt globes). It's more than adequate for our lighting needs and will also run my sewing machine or Barry's electric drill or angle grinder. However for lighting we find it more practical and much quieter to use the 12 volt lights and run them off a 12 volt truck battery sitting on the draw bar of the van. A fully charged battery lasts four or five nights in winter (longer in summer) using one or two lights at a time, and we recharge it with the jumper leads by putting it in the spare battery carrier in the utility whenever we go for a drive. I was surprised to learn that batteries last longer when frequently flattened and recharged this way. Ours have always given more than three year's service.

For mining operations we use the motor on our 4 KVA diesel generator to drive a pump by belt drive. Initially we tried a 1 h.p. electric pump but although its power requirement was less than that provided by the generator it refused to run it and we had to return it. The manufacturers could give no reason why it wouldn't work — it ran perfectly on mains power — but we have discovered that this can be a problem with some electrical equipment. It has to do with the starter windings I think. Similarly my washing machine spin dryer is reluctant to start at times although the generator is providing more than ample power. However the 4 KVA generator happily runs our 1½ h.p. submersible well pump, but not with any additional load.

For a household wanting self-generated 240 volt power 'on tap' at all times the cost in fuel alone is large and rising with every fuel price rise. Station folk have quoted



amounts from \$8,000 to \$15,000 per year. Added to this must be maintenance of the generators and replacement costs from time to time. Running the power plant for a part of each day reduces the cost but also the convenience. What it means is that electric fridges and freezers cannot be used as these need to be switched on most of the time. The alternatives, gas or kerosene refrigerators are all right in cool climates but become inefficient when it is very hot.

A 32 volt system consisting of generator, Free-light and a bank of batteries is, I think, very practical in outback situations. Providing direct current, the generator charges the batteries while it is running or the Free-light provides the current when the wind is blowing. The batteries will then provide power for lights and a limited amount of appliance use when the generator is off. However the batteries need replacing every three years or so and, I'm told, can cost around \$800. Thirty-two volt appliances are now difficult to obtain and if you can buy them new they are expensive.

What then is the best solution?

For us I think it will be a combination of several systems, depending where we decide to live. If mains power is not a possibility then it will probably be gas fridge and freezer, 12 volt or 32 volt lights with a small wind powered generator and then a 240 volt generator for the rest. Solar panels to charge a 12 volt system are available now, but expensive. We're hoping there will be a lot more solar and wind powered alternatives available soon.

N.B. One KVA equals 1000 watts, 1 h.p. equals 746 watts.

# A HELPING HAND ON THE FARM

By B.J. Russell, Grafton N.S.W.

Having plenty of house room, a small flat, ample land, rich soil, water, and a good climate for growing, we thought it would be a great idea to let others enjoy part of our wonderful farm life with cattle, chooks, ducks, a couple of sheep and several horses. We could not afford wages, but we could afford to provide bed, food and land for garden or a project *free*, in return for a couple of days help per week. Maybe there were young or old folk wanting to learn how to farm, or to have a farm project as an experience or a living, to be self-sufficient or just to see how they liked the work and country life.

We had milk, organic vegetables, lots of fruit (bananas, pawpaws, pineapples, persimmons, and many others) but we did need help. We thought the arrangement would be ideal for someone wanting to return to the land. Age was no barrier — in fact, there were no barriers at all. We simply wanted willing and helpful folk as we were not young. Nor were we stuffy but we could not cope with drugs or laziness.

So we advertised and received stacks of replies; let us go through them.

Julie was a delightful twenty year old, absolutely 'enthralled' (she wrote) at having a chance to learn how to live on a farm. She wanted to be self-sufficient in housing and food and was 'willing, eager to learn and would work hard at anything.' Good! Charming! We met her at the railway station, and drove her the fifteen miles out of town to our property. She spent the first evening shivering with fright that no lights were in sight but our own and was fearful of what the mild, innocent darkness might hold. One of us had to accompany her downstairs to the toilet or wait for her to finish showering and escort her upstairs again. What she feared would attack her I do not know. We slept on the open verandah, safely and coolly most of the year. She was alarmed there was not a lock on her door so we told her to hitch a chair against it under the handle, which would deter whatever visitors she had in mind. We never received visitors of that sort! Her windows were tightly closed against the night air and she kept the electric light on *all night*. In the morning, she came with me to corral dear old Daisy, the Jersey cow and see her milked. She kept a long distance between herself and the cow and was both fascinated and repelled by the manner of milking. She did not think she would ever be able to touch a cow! Then, when asked to help with the manure collection and armed with gloves, bucket, spade and wheelbarrow, she did not think she could pick up manure even if it was for the organic garden. Although gardening was 'her love', it must have been a long distance love because she could not distinguish between carrots and cabbages, onions and chokoes, and weeding was something she had never done, nor wanted to learn!

So, after a day or two of mutual frustration, it was with relief that she decided 'your farm isn't what I wanted', and left.

Cliff wrote a nice letter and said he would like to work on a farm for a couple of months, four or five days a week — if he liked it. He arrived late one afternoon with knapsack and equipment to suit, plus a lot of dirty clothing and instantly asked permission to wash it. In doing so he succeeded in so exasperating our 'twin-tub' that something broke in it. At dinner that night — two courses plus fruit — he asked if there were any sweets for dessert. No, there were not, would he like some more main course, or more of the mangoes, pawpaws, etc. piled in the dish? No, he did not eat that. As soon as dinner was over, he retired to his small flat (self-contained, separate from the house), and proceeded to enliven the night air with a small radio, which had the most penetrating sound I have ever heard. Eventually, at 11 p.m. I asked him would he please turn it down so that only he could hear, which he did remarking, however, that he could not read or sleep without it on. Next morning at 9 a.m. he arrived at the kitchen for breakfast (we had already finished ours about 7.45 a.m. our usual time, plus an earlier cup of tea). He gobbled down the fresh eggs and tomatoes on toast and proceeded to lash the rest of the toast with quarter pound slabs of butter, plus mounds of marmalade. He rested on the verandah a while after that effort, and presently at 10 a.m. came to me, as I thought, to ask what he could do. Instead, he said he thought he would now 'push on', he had other places to go. I was so astonished by the effrontery, that I stood amazed as he hitched up his knapsack, and took off. Fortunately, he did not ask me to drive him anywhere — we had driven thirty miles the previous day to pick him up from the bus stop!

Peter really wanted to try living on a farm, and work out some project he could do to keep himself. He had some experience on an orchard and irrigation farm. Would we give him a trial? O.K. No matter what was doing, or how urgent, he did not start work until 9 a.m., took two hours over lunch, and finished smartly at 4.5 p.m. He was willing to do anything, and did, but generally we wished we had not asked him since he did not pay attention to what we asked, or how it should be done, but proceeded to do it 'his way'. Belinda the cow was not used to his ways, and played up mightily when he wanted to double leg-rope her for 'safety'. I said we didn't need to do that, we could milk her out in the paddock if we wished. But as soon as I went away he did leg-rope her, and she promptly knocked over a bucket of milk, and finally left the cow-bail all 'moo-ed up'. Asked to take the hoe and chip thistles, he did, but his mind was not on the job. He chipped a few here and there, but left great masses of them completely untouched

because he 'didn't see them'. We wondered about the peculiar smell wafting over to us from his flat, sweet and heavy. Finally, someone suggested it either was or covered up some kind of drug. We gathered this was why he was not 'with us' most of the time. We could not cope with drugs, nor the results of them; we wanted *help* not problems! Exit Peter.

**Freda and Jane** were two lovely girls who were on drugs. They did help a lot in the kitchen and outside, too, as best they could, but it took more time to show someone how to do something than if you did it yourself! They had some sort of Monday night commitment, which meant they had to leave early that afternoon, but returned home late that evening. Then stayed away Monday night and returned midday Tuesday. Next they did not return from their weekend break but phoned to say they may as well stay away now until Tuesday morning, thus saving a double trip away Monday again. That meant three and a half days off per week. Finally the boyfriends became more attractive than learning organic gardening, or fencing, or weeding, and it became quite usual for them to hare off about 4 p.m. any day and not return until lunch the next day. If we needed extra help, like cattle drenching, chook culling, or dealing with a load of something coming in, they just were not there, nor were we ever sure when they would be. Oh, well, we put that one behind us.

**Natasha** was a foreign student who had decided to work and learn on an Australian farm during the holidays. By this time, we began to realise it was going to be difficult to cope with anyone wanting to 'learn farming'; they all wanted to be in the country, but not to work! Natasha asked questions and did the jobs required, but without seeming to take anything in about farming. She would bypass a fruit tree which was obviously languishing for water, and never see it. Cabbages could be eaten with grubs, the calves got out of their yard and in with the 5000 milking cows, but it was not something she thought to mention. All these things were patiently pointed out to her time and time again, but somehow she did not seem to learn. She did like to drive the tractor, but we have little real farm work for it. Anyhow, 'doing' a paddock for a crop is a special job, and if the rain is coming the seed must go in, bang, and there is little time for teaching how to guide a tractor for seeding. As she had no previous experience and was in a country new to her, I expect it was all too difficult. She stayed a couple of months, but no way was that girl going to make a farmer.

**Joe and Jenny** were a married couple with two small children. Jenny was lovely and very pleasant company. We made the flat available for them, and offered to extend it so they could have more room, provided Joe would help me with the project. He spoke of having carpentry knowledge and experience. But before arriving (and *after* all the arrangements were made) Joe phoned and said they liked the idea of a rent-free flat in return for two or three days work a week on the farm, plus the right to use land or

run cattle, but he did not like the idea of putting work into extensions. If he left anytime, then he would have done all that work for nothing! Anyhow we might die, and then he could be turfed out of the flat at any time. We said fine, we'll give you a renewable lease every two years so you cannot be turfed out at short notice. Anyhow, we weren't going to die yet, we didn't think. We can also fence off an area for your garden, supply the materials and help you with the job. You can have the use of the chook pens for your poultry if you wish, and you can also use some land to try out the cropping you mentioned. Well, once more he would be doing work for which he wouldn't be paid! That exit finished before it started.

Now we have stopped hoping for help on any terms, and have decided to lease out the whole farm, cattle and all, and go on a caravan trip around Australia for a couple of years and review the position then. Strangely, had any of these people really looked like helping out or wanting to learn, they would have been on a gold mine. We have no children and would willingly have left them the farm. We did not tell them this, of course. Ah, well, caravanning is a pleasant easy life, except for the odd punctures and mechanical troubles. I think we will sell the farm when the lease is up. There *must* be young or older people who would like to live in a pleasant place, in beautiful surroundings in the country, but so far we have not met them. We now have a near neighbour looking for help, so I am giving him a copy of this to *help* him!

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# DESIGNING FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

## Part Five

By Stephen Ingrouille, Melbourne.

A gentleman came into the shop several days ago and asked the cost of running a normal sixteen square house with solar electricity. Before I could answer, he said, 'I suppose that's like asking how long is a piece of string?' And he was right! I mentioned in my last article that it is not economical to use solar electricity where 240 V mains power is connected. The two sources of power are quite different. When using mains you can generally consume as much as you are prepared to pay for, at least until the blackout! Solar electricity does have advantages, particularly where the connection fee for mains power is high (or where connection is impossible i.e. islands) and where the anticipated consumption is low.

I believe the way to design a system is to work out what appliances you wish to run — lights, television, radio, pumps, power tools, etc. and for what duration each is to be run e.g. a television for three hours per night, and how much power each consumes. A television may consume twenty watts, so if it is on for three hours per night, the estimated daily consumption would be sixty watt hours per day for that particular appliance.

If these steps are followed for all the appliances you anticipate using, a picture starts to build up of your expected power consumption. Most electrical goods should have the power usage printed upon them. If you have not purchased the appliances, or you cannot find the label, contact the manufacturer. I suggest asking for the technical staff, because generally the sales staff do not have a clue about low voltage equipment and treat you as strange if you ask about power consumption for either low voltage or 240 V products.

It is important to establish how much power you expect to use. Of course it is just an estimate, and while daily consumption will vary, it gives a basis on which to work. The less power you expect to use, the cheaper the overall cost of your system.

Let us look at an example, say a holiday home, that is used mostly on weekends but does have several continuous weeks of summer use and eventually will be a full time residence. At present there is no mains power but the line is only half a mile away. Connection fee is quoted at \$18,000, a transformer may be required, and the electricity commission insist on cutting a swathe through the woodlot without considering underground lines as an alternative! For years a gas fridge and gas lights have been used, but it is hard to find a gas radio or TV, and the lights become rather hot in summer. In the particular case I have in mind, the owner used to park the car near the house and

run a TV from the battery via leads through the window until someone moved his car (and the TV) for him. Later he tried using a spare battery but that did not work out either.

A typical power demand in that situation might be thus:

Cooking: woodstove (winter); LP gas stove (summer).

Hot Water: woodstove (winter); solar hot water system (summer).

Heating: pot belly stove and/or open fireplace.

Cooling: insulation; wide eaves and air vents near the top of the north wall which suck cool convected air from a fern garden through another vent near the bottom of the south wall.

Lighting: presently gas lights.

Refrigeration: LP gas.

Freezer: LP gas.

Power Tools: small petrol generator.

Estimated electrical requirements:

Bedroom: One 13 W light for ½ hour.

Kitchen: One 13 W light for 3 hours.

Lounge: One 13 W light for 5 hours.

Bathroom: One 18 W light for ½ hour.

TV: 12 V 20 W colour for 2 hours.

Radio: 12 V 5W for 7 hours.

Estimated consumption: 189.5 watt hours/day.

This is what I would call a basic system but your requirements may be quite different. In this case, the house is not being used every day, but economically it is more viable to use a solar electrical panel that can provide power at slightly higher than the estimated daily consumption rate. More people may use the house in summer and hence may use the lights more, but nights are shorter in summer, and with the longer daylight hours more sunlight is available to charge the batteries. For this reason, some solar-electric pumps are an excellent investment because when you need the most water — summertime, say for irrigation — more energy is available.

Systems are designed with the anticipated amount of winter light in mind. I advocate using the least number of solar electrical panels possible. Some systems are designed on the basis that so many thousand dollars worth of equipment can be afforded, therefore that amount of equipment should be purchased. Of course if you have the power there, you will find a use for it — even if it is lighting an empty room!

For a basic system, I would suggest using only one large (35 W) panel, a 12 V battery bank and a battery protector. These should cost about \$790. Working on a winter average of six hours of suitable sunlight per day, you could expect about 210 W hours/day. Given that losses will occur in the system, this should provide sufficient power on the basis of the demand worked out above. You may have more or less light in winter in your area, but you would certainly have more available light in summer. Remember that solar electrical panels work on light not heat.

One of the advantages with this kind of system is that more panels can easily be added as required, such as when the house is used full time. Solar cell systems are very simple and as long as care is taken at the design stage, they should give trouble-free service for many years. When setting up a solar electricity system, there are a number of factors to be kept in mind.

1. When buying your electrical appliances where it is a choice between two products of equal value, buy the one that uses the least power.

2. Low voltage fluorescent lights are much more efficient than incandescent globes. Some people do not like fluorescent lights, but you can get good quality ones that produce a fairly steady, soft light.

3. It is important that you select the correct size wire to use with your system. This is determined by the load it has to carry and the length it has to run. Ideally, your solar panels should be near your batteries and there should be only short runs to your appliances.

4. The solar electrical panels should be mounted

facing due north, and perhaps on a hinge so they can be adjusted to face the winter sun when it is low in the sky, and the summer sun when it is high in the sky. Remember that solar electrical panels work on light not heat, so air has to be allowed to flow across and behind the panel.

5. Batteries are an important part of your system. The size and type you choose will depend on what you wish to run. Batteries should be kept in a well ventilated position, not subject to excess heat or cold, and should be positioned for easy observation.

6. A battery protector (voltage regulator) is also important as it stops the battery from being overcharged. The one we sell can also discern essential and non-essential loads, and turn off the latter when the battery level is low. The more care taken with batteries the longer they will last. Special home lighting batteries should be purchased.

7. An inverter may be used to convert power from whatever voltage you choose, say 32 V DC to 240 V AC. This may be useful for running some 240 V appliances, but remember it is an expensive item to purchase, consumes power in its operation, and must break down eventually. The need for an inverter depends on your requirements.

If you would like more information, call in or send two stamps to Going Solar, 320 Victoria Street, North Melbourne 3051. Ask for the solar electricity leaflet. We have a free design and recommendation service. There is also a book, *Guide to Solar Electricity* which is \$8.95 (or \$9.95 posted anywhere in Australia).

## CHARCOAL

By W.J. Tarplee, Dickson, N.S.W.

Charcoal is the residue left from incomplete burning. Thus to make it, you must commence burning a combustible substance and then stop the process before total combustion is completed. In my experience the best charcoal is made from a hard wood of which Australia has many suitable varieties.

The easiest way is to split 1 m billets of wood into pieces about 75 mm section. Ideally, you would split sufficient wood to make a stack 1 m by 1 m by 1 m. The stack is laid so that each succeeding layer runs at right angles to the preceding layer.

The stack is set on fire and allowed to burn until the entire contents are well alight. Obviously, some of the outside of the stack will burn away completely during the process, but it is necessary to make sure the centre is well alight. By judgement, and this comes from trial and error, you wait until the entire contents are partly combusted and then shovel dirt over the entire stack.

An alternative is to dig a 1 m cube hole and put the stack in the hole. Either way, you want to quench the fire but still allow the wood gasses to be driven off by the heat of combustion. Allow the stack to cool overnight and remove the outer layer of dirt. The contents of the stack should be charcoal.

You can also burn the wood in cut-out 200 litre drums, lighting the fire in the drum, but I have heard of accidents when the wood gasses recombusted from a chance spark. I think the dirt covered method would be the safer.

Bill Tarplee is the editor of *Australian Survivor*, a magazine concerned with alternative technology.



# Calendar Events

## Going Dairying

Three day residential course for people just beginning or who are thinking about going dairy farming.

The Principal, McMillan Rural Studies Centre, P.O. Box 353, WARRAGUL 3820.

## Armidale Community Crafts Festival '82

September 30th to October 9th, 1982

Natural Fibre Section — any articles created from natural fibre. Enquiries and entry forms to:

The Secretary, Armidale Community Crafts Festival, P.O. Box 685, ARMIDALE 2350. Phone 067-721-664.

## Appropriate Technology Festival — October 22-25, 1982.

Camping available, workshops, demonstrations, down to earth activities.

DTE Association, Unit 17, Peninsula Community Centre 219 Railway Parade, MAYLANDS 6051. Phone 336-2842 or 341-7630.

## Country Fair

Country Fair at Martinsville, 19th September, 1982. We are looking for stall holders with home produce, crafts, etc. or anyone willing to demonstrate their crafts. For further information contact:

Brenda Pearce, phone Newcastle 049-771-320.

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Enquiries: 09-336-2842.

## Treescape

The use of the tree as a decorative motif or concept in contemporary Australian crafts. August 17th to September 5, 1982.

Meat Market Craft Centre, 42 Courtney Street, NORTH MELBOURNE 3051, phone 03-329-9966.

## Mind-Made Health Congress, Toowoomba, Queensland November 28 to December 4, 1982

The Congress will examine various approaches to relieving the common illnesses in the community, many of which are 'mind-made' and will have a strong emphasis on prevention of disease.

The Congress Secretary, The Helen Vale Foundation, P.O. Box 359, WARWICK 4370. Phone 076-661-546 or 03-519-861.

## Caloundra Art & Crafts Festival

September 1st-4th at the Landsborough Shire Civic Cultural Centre, Caloundra.

Painting, drawing, print making, sculpture, pottery, handcrafts,

photography and literature. For brochure write to:

Festival Secretary, P.O. Box 45, MOFFAT BEACH 4551 with stamped, addressed envelope (9 x 4).

## A Gay Country Carnival

From 24th September to 4th October, 1982 at Mandala, a beautiful property near Uki and Mt. Warning. From Saturday 24th to Saturday morning 2nd, a retreat closed to visitors. Second, third and fourth is open to weekenders and day trippers. Write to:

Rob Kroening, 49 Collett Street, QUEANBEYAN 2620.

## Goldrush Folk Festival, Tennant Creek, N.T. August. Enquiries to:

Beryl Collins, 089-622-408(W) or 089-622-062(H).

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A.H.C.S., 264 Swansea Road, LILYDALE 3140.

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## Healing and Natural Medicine — Introductory Workshop Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th August at Phoenix Centre, Glenelg.


Theoretical and practical weekend with Robin Austin. Enquiries and bookings:

Robin Austin, 3 William Avenue, EAST GLENELG 5045. Telephone 08-294-8007.

## Permaculture Design Workshop, Perth, October 16-17, 1982

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# BEACHCOMBING ON AN ISLAND OFF THE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COAST

By Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island, Q.

If beachcombing means observing and collecting, then we must be full time beachcombers on a grand scale. Not to be confused with 'beach-bumming' which has connotations of laziness, slobbing and loafing. For us, our beachcombing is combined with our work and our daily activities.

This morning, Don set off on his trip to the mainland for the day for supplies. He had left only ten minutes before when I heard him calling me on the radio. He had spotted a small loggerhead turtle in trouble and asked me to hop on my bike and go see what I could do as he could not wait. Time and tide wait for no man and especially turtles.

Firstly, I chained our little dog up on the patio as she could present a problem with the turtle — she tried to take on a sand goanna about four times her size only yesterday. Then off I pedalled along the beach on the damp sand for about three kilometres to the spot where Don had directed me. Sure enough, there was the turtle beached on the night's high tide mark where it had apparently been tossed by the waves, and either rested too long or was too exhausted to follow the tide as it went out. Here there are significant differences between high and low tides and this particular one was a full moon tide and just happened to be the highest tide for the year. I could tell by the indentation in the damp sand, formed by the waves lapping around the turtle, that he would have been there all of six hours and had made no attempt to return to the water. The high noon sun and predators would have finished it off in a few more hours. As I approached, it saw me and there was a slight sign of life, the flippers made a feeble attempt at propelling itself. I could see no evidence of damage either to the shell or flippers, so I carefully picked him up (if he had been any larger I would not have been able to lift him on my own) and struggled down the fifty metres of beach to the water's edge. There I placed him in the shallows and with a couple of false starts and a little gentle prodding from me, he became mobile and swam away with incredible speed. Although slow and clumsy on land, under water they are graceful and fast. That made about the sixth turtle we have helped in this manner in the two and a half years that we have lived here.

This season we have had record numbers of green turtles and loggerhead turtles nesting on our island at night. Also the colourful little soldier crabs in their ever-marching armies, seem to have greatly increased in numbers lately. All along the beach front, the Casuarians (She-Oaks) are presently covered in soft new mini cones which bring the rainbow lorikeets in droves to feast on the



cones before they go brown and hard and drop to the ground. We have not observed the lorikeets here before in such numbers. Nature has a curious delicate balance and a complex ecological system which is sometimes difficult for us to understand.

At this time last year, we had teeming millions of flying foxes darkening the sky at sunset each evening and settling on the flowering gums which fringe the bushland bordering the beach. These night flyers would spend a few hours tearing at the blossoms in their frenzy to extract their food, all the while screeching noisily so that sleep eluded us until the wee hours of the morning. Then the mass migration would soar off to a nearby mangrove island where they would descend upon the mangrove trees and hang upside down on the branches in a sleeping stupor for all the daylight hours. Each morning, we would look out with dismay at the chaotic scene of broken blossoms and branches beneath the stripped trees and have grave thoughts of where our bees would be able to find sufficient pollen for their needs. However they must have found blossom elsewhere, for when honey extraction time came around, we found we had ample honey for our needs for months to come, as well as some left over for our friends, and also enough for an occasional 'barter'! Now this year there has not been a single flying fox sighted in the area, not even in the mango trees on the mainland.

The mud crabs should be plentiful right now, as they normally are, but alas, another of nature's tricky ones — the muddies are practically non-existent at the moment.

The professional crabber down the waterway tells us he has not seen them so scarce in fifteen years.

One day we found a spanner crab washed up dead (but rigor mortis had not yet set in). This type of crab is not usually found in this area. However, we brought him home and gave him the old Formalin injection treatment in his joints to preserve him and he now hangs mounted on a varnished plaque on our wall, along with saws from saw fish, polished turtle shells and a collection of 'special' shells and coral.

Odd bits and pieces of flotsam and jetsam float up from time to time and some prove to be very interesting. Once we found a Scotch whisky bottle with a note in it. It had been floating around for over a year and had a faded name, address and date on the note. We managed to read it and sent off a letter which was promptly answered by the Botany Bay yachtie who had 'posted' the bottle over the side of his yacht somewhere along the N.S.W. coast the previous year. Sometimes we find sealed plastic packets complete with floats which have been put out by various marine biology departments or universities and research bodies, with information inside to be completed by the finder and sent back to aid various studies and explorations. These we find especially interesting.

Many of our projects around the place have been constructed from timber which we have picked up along the beach. The top classic from driftwood constructions is our solid round dining table which Don made from a huge Oregon pine plank. An equivalent table sells for around \$300 in furniture shops. There was even enough left out of that plank for Don to make me a chess table for Christmas.

While these bits and pieces are all free bonuses of living by the sea, the real bonus for us is the observing part of beachcombing and the unexpected natural happenings, like the day we caught a smallish shark to use for crab-pot bait, and as we beached it, it gave birth to six fully formed baby sharks in two sets of three. Each trio was perfectly packaged together in the two transparent birth sacs. More recently, a similar experience occurred with a stingray.

Another day, we saw a fully grown echidna at the water's edge. As he was quite oblivious to our watching eyes, we observed him busily poking his long beak-like nose into the wet sand and apparently finding many tasty morsels to eat.

beachcombing observations on the island, but it is a natural rhythm and a pleasurable regimentation. By living attuned naturally to the sun and tides, one becomes closely related to the sea, land and aerial creatures that kindly share their island with us.

### YOGHURT

There is 35% more protein in yoghurt than there is in the milk from which it came; and it still contains calcium, phosphorous, Vitamin A, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin. As soon as you eat yoghurt rather than drink milk you double your absorption of calcium and you put live bacteria into your bowel to create a healthy environment. Reprinted from *Permaculture Nambour Summer/Autumn 1981*.

## Seed Swap

We are interested in swapping seed with other folk. The seed we could swap are round flat paw paw, pumpkin, cobra melon (Indian cream), yellow squash, long red capsicum, yellow egg tomato, okra, snake gourd, dwarf snake bean, brown seeded climbing snake bean, snow peas. These seed are all non-hybrid. We would like carrot, beetroot, sugar loaf cabbage, kohlrabi, turnips, lettuce seeds hearting and non-hearting; all seeds are to be non-hybrid.

**Brisbane Organic Growers Group, C/- Ron and Myrtle Charteris, 34 Heaton Street, ROCKLEA 4106.**

I have seeds of *Rollinia deliciosa* - Amazon Custard Apple which bears in 2½ years and grows in temperate areas. Also I'm after seeds of any organically grown vegetables and grains.

**Kurt Ruzsicska, 2/207 Spence Street, BUNGALOW 4870.**

If any reader would like some sword bean seeds, I have some to swap. I would like luffa gourd, carob or giant sunflower seeds in exchange.

**Liz Rosenberg, P.O. Box 135, BROOME 6725.**

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# WOOD FINISHING

By John Elliot, Box Hill North, Victoria.

*This is the end of this series, I can't think of any more to write about as far as furniture goes. I have enjoyed writing the articles — it has clarified a jumble of knowledge in my own mind and I hope has helped some readers in their efforts.*

Over the years we all come across tips that make life easier. Here are a few I have found helpful.

For those of you with aching arms from seemingly endless sanding, there is an easier and faster way to do the job. It is called a cabinet scraper. You may be able to buy one but they are easy to make. Take a rectangle of steel around 4 in by 3 in by  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. Round all four corners and then clamp in a vice with a long side uppermost. File the edge, using the length of the file along the edge to produce a burr on both sides. See Figure 1.

Then using the 'handle' of the file, run firmly along the edge to heat it up and tilt the handle along either side to consolidate the burr. The scraper is held in both hands, tilted to about 30 degrees from vertical (top away from you), with thumbs on the back and fingers on the front and pushed along the surface away from you. With a little practice the results are amazing. A cabinet scraper will strip off old surfaces, remove sanding marks and imperfections and leave a smooth surface. When the scraper blunts it can be revitalised several times with the handle before it is necessary to file smooth and start again.

Yes, there is a use for cigarette ash! Train smokers to deposit ash in one container and butts in another. Mix the ash with linseed oil to make an abrasive paste that is ideal

for removing small blemishes and water marks from polished surfaces.

Chairs that rock because of uneven legs can end up with no legs left when you try to even them up. I have not tried this one, but I am assured it works by an old hand. Establish the gap between the floor and the shortest leg and remove half of this length from the two closest legs. Make sure the surface on which you measure is level.

See Figure 2.



E.G. IF LEG C IS 1 INCH SHORT,  
REMOVE  $\frac{1}{2}$  INCH FROM LEGS A AND D.



FIGURE 2

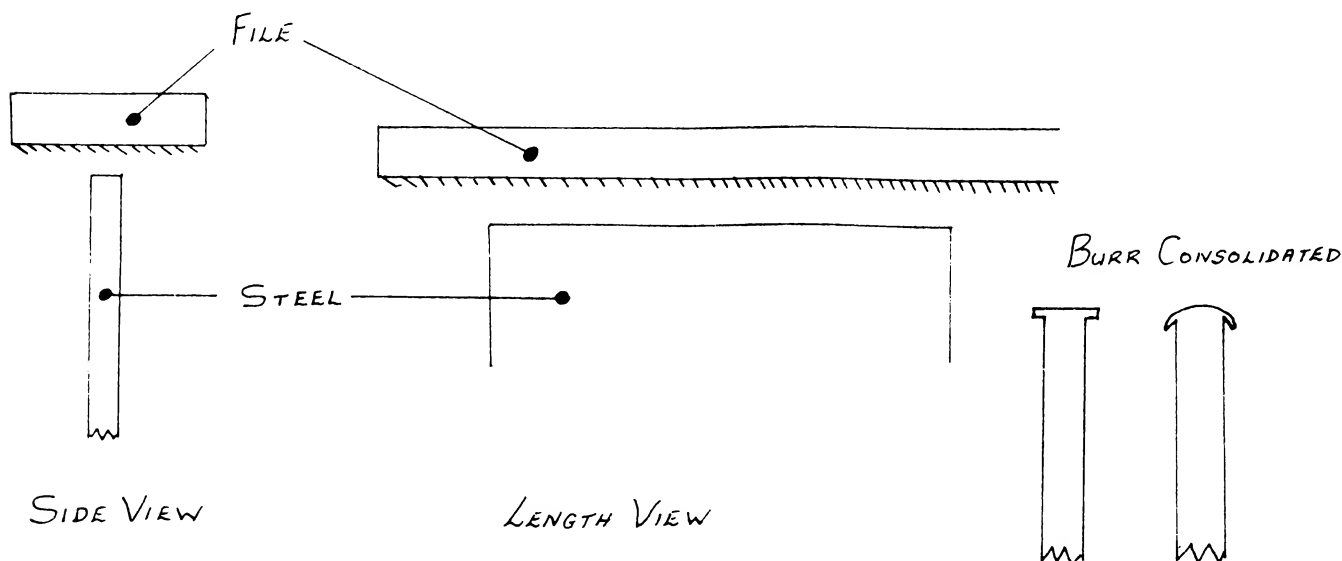


FIGURE 1

BURR PRODUCED

When putting your finishing coats on furniture, it can help to use a platform that lifts the lowest part of the piece high enough for you to work in comfort. Use carpet or underfelt to cover the top and sides of the platform to prevent chips on your new surface when removing the piece. The carpet will soak up most spills or drips.

Those annoying white spots in grooves and along edges left after the burnishing compound dries can be removed with a toothbrush or soft nail brush.

The surface is not finished if you have white dots over it. Sand lightly and recoat until you have a glass smooth surface.

Do not be afraid to mix different colour stains to achieve an effect. Mix in small quantities and take careful note of quantities of each, then mix enough to do the entire job.

If wood colours are not your scene, interesting effects can be obtained by staining in any colour and grain filling in a contrasting colour. Seal the stain before applying the grain filler to keep the colours separate.

That 'antique' white on Queen Anne style furniture is white tinted with blue or yellow.

Do not wax a floor that has been finished with polyurethane unless you want an indoor skating rink.

Small round marks called 'fisheyes' that appear on the surface as you apply any type of finish are caused by either wax or silicon. They will continue to re-appear no matter how many coats you apply. The surface has to be stripped back to bare wood.

That textured dark effect seen on some furniture, usually pine, is achieved by heating the wood with a blow torch and brushing with a wire brush. The softer wood burns away more readily, leaving the harder of the annual rings standing proud.

\* \* \*

### HANDY HINT

To take the smell from a freshly painted room, place half a raw onion in a bowl of water in the middle of the room.

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## GRASS ROOTS PRICE RISE

It is always painful to have to announce a price rise for Grass Roots. We try to consider the readers' interests first and foremost and to absorb price increases as they occur but lately, as you would be aware, the going has been tough. At the beginning of the year, printers received a reduction in weekly working hours and a further pay rise is looming. As well, paper costs and postage rates have risen and there has been a general wage rise. Unfortunately we must now share these costs with you, the reader, and accordingly the retail price of Grass Roots No. 33 will be \$2.95 per copy with subscriptions at \$19.00 per year.

Despite these cost increases, we feel Grass Roots is still terrific value. It is about twice the size it would be if commercially published and there is always a determined effort to make each issue better than the last. Since the price rise will take effect next issue, now is the time to send in all those subscriptions and gift subscriptions for friends you have been thinking about.

## ARTICLE UPDATES

New Fruits, No. 29 pp. 42 and No. 30 pp. 31.

Mountain Blue Rare Fruits were listed as a supply source for the fruits discussed in David Bell's articles. They would like to bring the following to readers' attention; they have been swamped with requests for seed and fruit trees.

*Just a note to let you know our nursery at Federal is a wholesale nursery and at present we are marketing only blackberry plants. The other rare fruits we intend to grow are for our own fruit rather than as nursery lines.*

'Why Not Grow Peanuts?' No. 29, pp.18.

The author, Margaret Atkinson writes:

*The response to my article has been excellent and I have sent off over sixty-four lots of peanut seed. Unfortunately I have now run out and been forced to return a number of padded bags, seedless. I do apologise but hope readers will understand.*

Homespun Knitting, No. 21 p.75.

Val Gowen writes:

*I have just realised there is a mistake in the pattern and hope the following lines will clear it up. New knitters may not be aware of the mistake.*

*Where it says 'Knit basque on No. 5 needles' it should read 'No. 7 needles', and with the sleeves where it says 'Do cuff on No. 5's then on No. 7's knit etc. . . . ' it should read 'Do cuffs on No. 7's, then on No. 5's knit . . . .*

# Down home on the farm...



by Meg Miller

I love winter. I love the wind whistling through my hair, the rain on my face and the exhilaration of fresh, cold mornings. I grizzle about it and complain, but deep down I love this season that ushers in flannelette sheets and hot water bottles, smoking fires, dripping clothing and hot soup and scones. I really start to glow when all these become integrated into my daily life.

Somehow we seem more of a family in winter. The open fire draws us together and we spend happy evenings talking and reading or catching up on the little jobs we have shelved for months. There is always clothing drying off the back of a chair, and damp boots and sleepy cats cluttering the floor. It's hard work too, constantly collecting kindling and firewood, keeping at least one set of clothes clean and dry, and feeding animals in the bitter cold or driving rain.

With all those scones and thick soups inside us, David and I have been feeling the need for extra exercise. Chopping wood is stimulating, so too is digging and raking around the garden. Then walking through a department store recently, I spied a football. Sunshine was overcome with her present, and we have found it splendid fun. We try and make the time for a few kicks each night and have discovered that with the turkeys, goats and guinea fowl as spectators, we have the makings of a traditional football match. The turkeys love the excitement and rush up and down after the ball. The does stand around while the buck makes aggressive overtures, and the guineas congregate in noisy, boisterous groups while we try to dodge the mounds of messy chook manure keeping a bag ready to wipe the ball when the necessity arises!

I have finally uncovered one of the deep mysteries of the universe. I realise, of course, that many others have walked this same path before me and no doubt shared the same amazement and wonder. It really does sound exciting, doesn't it. What is this profound mystery? Simply, how to bring rain! I have actually discovered yet another trigger for ensuring a downpour. Others will swear that washing the car, laundering the blankets or polishing the kitchen floor will bring a torrent from the heavens. I must admit that my experiments in staining and polishing the back porch were not without success. Imminent visits from in-laws and the accompanying scramble to tidy up and mow the lawns has also been quite reliable. Postpone lawn mowing to the last minute and it will rain for sure. But

I have now discovered the immediate catalytic reaction caused by the presence of freshly made *uncovered* mud bricks — *three days and three nights of steady rain*. With our area so dry, obviously too few people are making mud bricks!

Despite the satisfying burst of rain, it is a dry season with paddocks only now beginning to wear an emerald glow. Not only is the feed situation critical but the garden has been growing slowly and the house tanks remain at a precariously low water level.

Grazing tucker for stock is poor and our goats have found they must really stretch their legs to find decent pickings. A positive off-shoot from this is that they are no longer lingering around the garden gate to break in. The turkeys and geese being voracious grass eaters have also had to scout for green feed and there are periods of the day when the farmyard is almost deserted. We had planned to introduce a new member to our menagerie — a house cow — but this has had to be postponed until later in the year. With grazing so poor, it would be foolhardy to purchase now and have to feed yet another mouth over the cold, hungry winter months.

Earlier in the year we lashed out and bought a rotary hoe. Actually neither David nor I can remember who bought it for whom, and we each insist it belongs to the other. For months the ground has been like baked clay and there seemed little sense in trying to turn it over. However, after a recent downpour, we both organised ourselves to start work with 'your' rotary hoe, gathered around the machine, pressed and pulled, but to no avail. The goats had eaten the distributor lead! With this replaced, the ground soft, grandiose projects in mind, all we need now is a spare weekend!

This year we are planting part of the old orchard with garlic and part with a small crop of flowers for selling at community and craft markets. The latter is an exciting project and one that Chris, our co-worker, is overseeing. The garlic is my pre-occupation. Whilst I personally loathe the stuff, farmyard consumption of it is astronomical. The poultry are dosed several times a year, while the more sensitive fellows like the turkeys take their ration daily. The ill are given several garlic capsules per day and should an animal or bird look peaky, it is immediately penned and fed copious quantities of this wonderful herb.

Goats are always fussy. They will happily drink garlic water (yes, the milk does become tainted) but generally 'tend to gag when given a clove or two. Often we will slip a couple of capsules into a slice of apple — a no pain, no fuss method — or alternatively they will happily munch through the green stalks of the plant. With at least a bulb a day disappearing down someone's throat, I will need either a secret benefactor or every available space planted with garlic! I have actually started digging up parts of the lawn — I couldn't wait for the rotary hoe — and have a number of professional looking rows planted out already. A practice run really for hardening up back and leg muscles prior to attacking the orchard. With over ten kilos of garlic, I'm sure to go a long way!

Looking around the rest of the garden and at some of our half finished tasks, I couldn't help wondering if we were actually 'getting anywhere'. At Christmas, we sat around and planned our activities for the coming year but so far few projects seem to have borne fruit. Obviously much of the planning was unrealistic but, at the same time, there are always irritating obstacles that seem beyond one's control such as the vagaries of the weather or recalcitrant machinery.

Must plans be inflexible? Considering the present state of the garden and the meshwork of my expectations, I realise the situation is not so gloomy. Lost in the preoccupation with what I had anticipated, I completely overlooked some important achievements. Yes, certain crops did go in late, I did miss out on getting others planted, and those rotten goats did attack and decimate many of the brassicas. But what about the long term gains like using the seed we had saved from last year's plants, the rich soil being built up with compost and manure, and the garden area itself being extended? Surely that is 'getting somewhere'.

The same has occurred with the animals. Recently two young turkey hens became unwell. One was clearly affected by blackhead, the other just miserable with a condition difficult to diagnose. I isolated them, gave them the garlic capsule treatment and placed them in an enclosure in a quiet corner of the garden. But they fretted and snapped at each other so waspishly that I relented and let them out to wander. The least affected bird recovered quickly, but poor Frances Frangipani was very ill. I treated her, nursed her and finally cajoled her back to health. As she recovered, she helped herself to the dozen spinach seedlings I had just established plus numerous other bits and pieces. Of course, I ranted and raved and it was only later I saw a deeper significance — only a year ago, blackhead (a disease fatal to turkeys) was out of control. I had lost half the young stock and the older birds continued to suffer from intermittent minor attacks. I lost even a well-grown young tom. Now, a year later, I have actually nursed a very ill bird back to health. The stock, bred on the property, have become stronger and more resistant, their management more effective, and the

mortality rate almost nil. Somehow I had overreacted to the loss of a few paltry seedlings and overlooked the small but remarkable significance of a recuperating turkey and a progressively effective management system.

The lesson brought home to me is that while it is important to make plans, important to build those castles in the sky, it is *essential* to stand back and take a clear objective view of your efforts. With the blinkers removed, you can see beyond the trap of thinking simply of the end result to the enjoyment, satisfaction and creativity derived from participating in the doing process.



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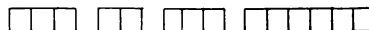
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# Land Link

**Land Link is a Grass Roots service which provides experience or farm holidays for those without land in the country. At the same time, it should provide help and income for rural folks who need it. All round, it should be a lot of fun for everyone. If you're interested in spending some time in the country, as an individual or as a family, then write to the people below and see if you can work something out with them. If you live in the country, and would like to participate in Land Link, just write into Grass Roots.**

We are a community of twenty adults and a dozen kids living on 150 acres in the hills north of Lismore. Our land is about 90% forest with the remainder being developed for organic gardens and orchards, houses and workshops. We are vegetarians, into non-dogmatic spiritual ways and environmental activism. We have no domestic animals. Our agreements include truthfulness, harmlessness, respect for nature and no dope or alcohol. Decisions are reached by consensus. Our community kitchen/food storage/eating-meeting/office/ library/ hanging out building is now being replaced and we are concentrating our energies onto this building project five days a week and invite participation from a few people who would like to help/learn/grow with this building. It will be a two storey double hexagon made of mudbricks and timber. We mill our own timber and as well as building, tasks include cooking, child care (kids are 0 to 7 years) and maintenance of gardens and orchards. If you are interested in joining us for this project please write.

John Seed, P.O., THE CHANNON 2480.

Is there a family or couple out there who are caught up in city life but would love a working holiday on a small organically run farm? You would need to bring a caravan or tent but could use our conveniences. We need help in digging post holes (by hand), building a new chook pen and help in our big vegie garden. In return we would love to share our vegies and maybe a regular visitor could keep a sheep or two here and come up at shearing time and take the fleece home to spin. The possibilities are endless for someone who would like to make their second home here in their holidays or weekends.

We are into the Findhorn way of thinking and loving and adore children - ours range from 12 years to 18 months. An older couple would also be welcome and we could put up a student *but* strictly *no* alcohol, tobacco or dope. Please write before coming.

Pat and Wayne Fisher, 'Narweena', Grafton Street, Red Range, GLEN INNES 2370.

We are two very naive city people (aged 27 and 41) who need our idealism tempered by practicality. Could we visit you, at least to say hello and preferably to share your daily routine for a while? As the hope is to buy land in a year or two the present aim is to explore climate, suitable crops and animals, soils and lifestyles. We will be travelling through N.S.W. and Queensland from September to December with camping gear and food and would welcome some work experience and advice.

Carolyn and Barwon Johnston, P.O. Box 122, SOUTH FREMANTLE 6162.

I have ten acres of land and a quite comfortable farmhouse and am looking for someone to look after it - rent free - for the months of August and September. The only responsibilities would be to feed 25 chooks, 3 ducks and a cat and a bit of gardening. It's a large garden but one day a week should keep it under control. There's a slow combustion stove with hot water system and an open fire place - quite warm and cosy. Walpole is eight miles away and the school bus stops at the front gate. Looking forward to hearing from someone.

D. Drachenberg, C/- Post Office, WALPOLE 6398 or ring JARRAH GLEN 23.

We have a small spare bedroom we would be willing to let to a lady/girl for her keep in return for help in the house. We cannot afford to pay wages. Our sheep property may not be what G.R. people are all about but it is our lifestyle. We have not been here long and are just getting ourselves started.

I teach our two children (boy 5 and girl 8) correspondence as well as help outside as much as possible, with the result housework comes a lucky(?) last. Also I do all the family sewing and knitting and am trying to

start a garden. I would dearly love to get back to spinning and weaving also try pottery. There is a very active craft group in Quilpie.

We are a very quiet, peace loving family, only go the 50 miles to town once a month. We have no luxuries - only very basic necessities. Anyone who can put up with dust, heat and flies and a non drinker please write to us. We have old fashioned moral standards so any girl/lady would be well treated.

Bill and Alva Allen, 'Lochabie', QUILPIE 4480.

We are a young couple in our mid twenties with two young children, two sheep and two goats. We would like to hear from anyone who might be able to help us achieve our ambition of an alternative to life in a busy industrial centre where we now live. In return for the use of a house and some land with plenty of water for gardens and to run a few house animals, preferably within five or six hours drive of Sydney (family), we would be willing to help with gardening or care of stock, general chores or possibly act as caretakers for owners who have commitments or responsibilities elsewhere. We are keen gardeners and have some practical knowledge gained from growing most of our own vegies and fruit. We also have some experience with sheep, poultry and goats.

We are not fanatics of any description nor do we have any prejudice against those who are. We enjoy a quiet simple life and would like to raise our family in a less confused and competitive society and possibly get a little closer to a natural life in a natural environment. We will answer any correspondence and will be happy to hear from anybody with any offers or friendly help.

Rod and Debbie Walker, 12 Popes Road, WOONONA 2517. Phone 042-842-284.

I would really like to hear from anybody with a farm who could use an extra pair of hands on the occasional weekend. Obviously, it would need to be within a reasonable distance from Sydney. I am 22, a vegetarian and play the acoustic guitar. I am interested in learning more about organic gardening and the keeping of useful birds. If anyone could use the help please drop me a line. I would have my own accommodation as I have an old Kombi.

Greg Coles, 24 Jordan Street, FAIRFIELD 2165.

My dog and I are terribly bored with a suburban working life and are planning on jumping into the car and heading off into the wild blue yonder. Anyone out there who would like the assistance of a carpenter for a time please write. My rates are food and a place to sleep and an atmosphere conducive to the kicking of my nicotine habit. If you're feeling wealthy some money would come in handy. I'm also very handy with cars and things mechanical. Any suggestions welcome. Distance is no limit - VWs go for miles on a tank.

David Sedgman, C/- P.O. Box 105, TOOWONG 4066. Ph. 07-371-7954.

The other day Marguerite and I were discussing how far things had 'got' in three months and where we were going in the next few years. There is really more work than two pairs of part time hands can handle so we want to share our quiet, rural retreat with a third pair of hands attached to an honest, energetic, enthusiastic, omnivorous, non fanatic female. In return for helping with gardening, unramshackling the house, milking, stock feeding and so on, we can offer really good tucker and cheap rent. We are only an hour's drive from Hobart in a really beautiful valley overlooking the Huon River on ten acres of virgin pasture so tree planting is the order of the day. Interested? Drop us a line.

Jon and Marguerite, P.O. Box 73, FRANKLIN TAS. 7113.



# Land Link

We are looking for a couple to live rent free, in a very large old country house on 52 acres of land in Gippsland about five hours drive from Melbourne. The situation is peaceful and beautiful with bush close by and plentiful wildlife. It is about 25 miles to either of the nearest towns so it would be important to have a car.

If people living there were interested they could keep some animals but we would not want cattle or goats running free as we are anxious to preserve our trees and shrubs and encourage the new growth. There is room to grow vegetables and we would be happy to pay for any fencing necessary. We would also pay for maintenance jobs if people were interested in doing them. At present our grown-up family and friends use the place for holidays but as there is more than one kitchen and many rooms, caretakers could still have a reasonable amount of privacy at busy times, but might like to holiday elsewhere over the Xmas/New Year period. We would be happy to have people living there indefinitely if we found we all got on well together.

Alison and Geoff Goding, 24 Walpole Street, KEW 3101.

Refuge offered by family of four to anyone seeking a retreat from the evils and stresses of living in the New Age. Persons seeking fellowship, inner peace and truth most welcome. Situated on isolated farm in N-W Tasmania. Stay a day, a week, who knows? Contribute as you can.

Tim and Carmel, Dave (3) and Kate (12). Ph. 004-311-391.

We are two ladies (Kris and Jo) who are planning on travelling

westwards from Adelaide around early September. We are interested in meeting people along the way and would be especially grateful if we could swap a few days work in exchange for board. Between us we have had some experience in gardening (vegies and herbs), mudbrick making, spinning, cooking, animal care, milking, horse breaking and training. All letters will be forwarded to us.

Jo Tucker, C/- 19 Herrings Lane, HAPPY VALLEY 5159.

Professional Therapist, planning trip to northern areas to gain insight into alternate lifestyles. Have worked with Hypnosis for Behaviour Modification, Sex Therapy and general problems including Stress control, Relaxation and Motivation. Willing to assist in above areas in exchange for hospitality and opportunity to enlarge knowledge. Other interests include qualified Stone and Building Mason and general building activities. Prepared to work with groups or individuals.

John Shephard, 14 Simmons Street, WAGGA 2650.

We will be travelling in Tasmania for several months from the end of October. While there we would love to stay with any obliging people who may need some extra help around their house or land. We are travelling in an old, but cosy, campervan so would have our own accommodation needing only somewhere to park. Also any information on places not to be missed around Tasmania would be appreciated.

Kerry Denman, C/- Post Office, ADAMINABY 2630.

## Late Unclassifieds

**WORK WANTED:** I am 22 years old and will finish uni this year. I am looking for work on a station or farm – any type of work for board and some pay if possible. I have no experience in this field but have worked for two years as a builder's labourer. I am not afraid to listen and hard work does not worry me. I finish in November. Location of work is unimportant though I would prefer outback Qld., N.T. or W.A.

Mike Uren, 17 Naroo Street, BALWYN 3103.

**HARNESS FOR SALE:** Spring cart harness, dray harness, lead harness, low traces, etc. All fully reconditioned or new. All repairs carried out to collars, harness and saddles. Enquiries welcome.

J. Randall, MOORLAND 2443, telephone 065-565-162 evenings.

**LAND FOR SALE:** Many readers have written to Grass Roots asking for information about land for sale in S-E Queensland. Sunshine Realty is the 'acreage specialist' for the Sunshine Coast hinterland region from Mooloolah-Nambour-Eumundi and west to Kenilworth. At the time of writing we have 6.6 acres west of Eumundi for \$20,000. As an avid G.R. reader with an understanding of the problems faced when setting out to buy one's 'patch of paradise', I would be only too happy to help anyone wishing to buy land in this area. Write to:

Sunrise Realty, 29A Howard Street, NAMBOUR 4560 or phone 071-411-900, A.H. 071-421-732.

**TO RENT:** We own a 103 acre property 25 km out of Grafton. Is there a young couple, family or retired couple who would be prepared to develop fencing for their own use as well as ours and do small amounts of clearing (tea tree) while living on the block. We would like a rent of \$20 per week which would be put into the property and materials for improvement therefore benefitting both of us.

Mail is delivered to the gate twice a week and the school bus (to Grafton) passes the gate every morning. We have planted kiwi fruit, grapevines, tamarillo trees, peaches, passionfruit, mulberry, paw paw and guava. As there is no house a caravan would be ideal to live in. We are envisaging a family living on the block to gain experience for two or three years until they move onto their own block. Of course we aren't looking for religious fanatics, people who want to grow and smoke 'dope' on our land, or bludgers – just people who want to enjoy the block and have a little farming experience while escaping the rat race.

Julie and Alan Massey, Flat 3, 38 Hilltop Cres., FAIRLIGHT 2094.

**SCREEN PRINTING BUSINESS FOR SALE, MELBOURNE:** After 20 years of successfully operating my one-man screen printing shop in Melbourne, I'm now moving to the country and would like to pass on this unique, profitable business to a person who would like to live in the city and be self-employed, free from most business pressures while keeping in mind the practical need to make a satisfactory return on money invested.

Situated on a main road in the eastern suburbs, close to shops, schools and train, the business operates from a double storey Victorian style building. The print shop and equipment are on the ground floor while above is a comfortable self contained two bedroom flat. This particular set up is ideal for living above the work place and reaping the financial and lifestyle benefits such an arrangement makes possible. At the rear of the property is a separate entrance, backyard, barbecue, two car garage/workshop plus parking for three more vehicles. Long lease of the premises is available, with or without the flat. Price is negotiable on a W.I.W.O. basis around \$12,000 with some vendor's terms if required. I would also be prepared to stay on for a reasonable time and help the new owner settle in. Contact:

Bob Wilmot, 285 Canterbury Road, CANTERBURY 3126. Phone 03-836-8074.

## Late Feedback

**Dear Folk,**

After ten years of wanting to achieve a more self-sufficient lifestyle we still feel far away from achieving it. Either we will buy a piece of land and build for ourselves or become part of a community. If any community is interested we have many skills – my husband is a carpenter/joiner and at the end of this year will have a diploma in art. He is able to weld and work in metal. I have a B.A. and a Diploma of Education, trained to teach art, English and human development. I have been teaching for 7 or 8 years and have worked extensively with younger children with art and craft as well. We would like to hear from other like-minded people and people in our area.

Faye and Tihar Ugrinor,  
59 Walker Crescent,  
NARRABUNDAH A.C.T. 2604.

# Unclassifieds

**FOR SALE:** Four and a half acres, bounded one side by creek with deep water hole. Fully fenced with large shed and yards. Large house with closed in verandah, old style, solid with plenty of character. Combustion stove, hot and cold water (windmill pumping to house), 240 V generator, phone and power available, 25 miles west of Warwick along sealed road. Winters have warm, sunny days, cold nights. Rains come in summer – ideal for growing vegetables. Asking price \$28,000 negotiable. Contact by writing to:

L. Doneathy, Thanes Creek, via WARWICK 4370.

**HOUSE TO RENT:** Would anyone be interested in renting my 3 B/R house during their holidays? It is at Cannons Creek on Western Port Bay, two minutes walk from the beach. General store or shopping at Cranbourne, 10 minutes away. There is a Coastal Reserve and plenty of quiet areas in which to contemplate, think and walk. Large kitchen, freezer, fridge, electric stove, small washing machine, interior toilet, two carports and dog kennel. I am hoping to be holidaying at my parents' place and would feel better if someone was staying at my place. My holidays are due to be taken anytime from the end of July, so if you would like a quiet area in which to holiday, or conversely, would like a taste of country life before your big plunge then please contact me.

Rosemary Box, 6 May Street, CANNONS CREEK 3977.

**FOR SALE:** One hundred beautiful acres in the very pretty and secluded Totnes Valley near Mudgee. It has two paddocks completely fenced and another partly fenced. There is an abundance of water with two dams and a bore with a windmill. Also plenty of tank water around the house which is a 2 B/R log hut with a view of the valley floor. There is no phone or electricity but a neighbour does have the phone if necessary. Mail is delivered to the school bus stop three times a week. The 100 acres consists of heavily wooded mountainous land as well as extremely fertile flat, cleared acreage. I have been running goats and sheep on the property as well as growing berries, fruit trees and vegetables. I am asking \$65,000 and would feel happier knowing it was being sold to people with similar viewpoints. Also I would like to sell my animals to people who would care for them as I have i.e. with lots of tender, loving care and herbal medicines. There is a flock of coloured sheep, Angora and milking goats. Please write or seek me out at Paddington Markets, Sydney, every second Saturday. I have a stall selling coloured and white fleeces, handspun wool and hand knitted products.

Len Calvi, Minbalup, Totnes Valley, COOYAL 2850.

**HOUSE TO RENT:** We have a farm in the Korumburra/Loch area that we are unable to occupy as we originally planned so we are looking for some G.R. people who may be interested in renting the house and garden only. The house is a fibro/timber building of four basic large rooms plus laundry and bathroom. Loads of tank water available, septic sewerage, electricity, hot water, telephone and gas heater. Large garden complete with many fruit trees and three fowl yards. There may also be a small paddock available for a few animals if required. We particularly want someone who would appreciate the garden and care for the fruit trees. Delightful hilly area, local primary school very close, two large towns within 25 km as well as local craft market nearby. If someone would like to learn more about it please contact:

Meryll Wodetzki, 592 Queensberry Street, NORTH MELBOURNE 3052 or phone 03-241-5017.

## THE DEADLINE FOR G.R. 33 IS SEPTEMBER 3RD

**SHARES FOR SALE:** Shares in 240 acres of N.S.W. northern tablelands unaffected by dieback. Approximately 40 acres pasture, 200 acres bush. Private, accessible building sites, ample building materials. Creek with large ponds during severest drought, 3500 ft mountain, traprock watershed. Half newly fenced. Industrious, creative community. Only two shares each \$5,000 (including freehold title transfer and registration). Further details from:

Kent Trussell, Cherrytree Communications, DUNDEE 2370 or phone 067-344-124.

**FOR SALE:** Lavender Flowers, Rose Petals, Sandalwood Powder. The flowers have been carefully and naturally sun dried to retain their natural colour and maximum fragrance. They are very light so you receive a large volume for a small weight. The sandalwood powder is of high quality and has a very delightful fragrance. These materials are suitable for sachets, potpourris, incense, etc.

\$10¼ kg, \$19½ kg, \$35/kg

All prices are post-paid anywhere in Australia. Please write to:

Peter Hunt, P.O. Box 148, PASCOE VALE SOUTH 3044. Phone 03-386-2107, 9.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m.

**CARETAKER WANTED:** An attractive 106 acre property at Colo, 40 minutes north of Windsor, Sydney. Approx. 40 acres cleared to pasture, the rest natural bushland. Property surrounded on three sides by the recently acclaimed Wollemi National Park. Rough shed dwelling that would lend itself towards improvement with tank and fireplace, no electricity. Stables for horses and an old tractor in working order. I am looking for some person or persons, old or young, of good character who are genuinely interested in living on such a property. In return for free accommodation I ask only that they feed the horses during the winter months. Feed will be supplied by owner. This property is off the main road and offers total privacy and isolation, yet is only five minutes from a small general store on the main road. There would be no objection for the suitable person or persons having their own domestic animals or making any improvements to the dwelling if they so desire.

This property has been classified as a fauna refuge and is abundant with wild duck, kangaroos, wombats and bird life that would suit any nature lover. For suitable persons this situation would be available for as long as it suited them. Would all applicants please write to me:

Peter Panich, 6 Winifred Avenue, EPPING 2121.

**FOR SALE IN TASMANIA:** Approximately 35 acres of first class land with BV fully furnished 3 B/R home in picturesque valley with beautiful views, 5 miles from Sheffield in northern Tasmania's scenic Kentish municipality. Approx. 10 acres under grass, two acres of cultivation, balance natural bush. Permanent creek runs through full width of property. Very quiet, peaceful area with 'postcard views' yet close to all facilities. Only 25 km from Devonport which has city status and is both a sea and airport.

The land includes a large established vegetable garden, variety of fruit trees, small fruit and flower garden, 15 laying hens, one milking cow, one hack, a garden rotary hoe, lawn mower and other extras.

The house is fully furnished including fridge, deep freeze, 3 B/R suites, lounge suite, W to W carpets, TV and radiogram. Abundant built in cupboards, spacious windows all with Venetian blinds, hot and cold water, electricity and phone. Will sell W.I.W.O., no extra capital needed to be established. Ideal for retiring people. The house alone is worth the asking price of \$65,000.

C.L. Elliott, Box 107, SHEFFIELD 7306. Phone 004-911-526.

**PARTNER WANTED:** Adventurous, active female interested in sharing a life of sailing aboard thirty-three foot cutter, with artist/architect/yacht designer aged 32. Please write to:

Rod O'Brien, 977 Barrenjoey Road, PALM BEACH 2108.

**FOR SALE:** House and business opportunity on N.S.W. south coast. Landscape Gardening business and house at historic Nelligen on the Clyde River 8 km from Batemans Bay. Would suit a couple wanting to move from city life to a small country town and full employment. The house of 19 sq overlooks river and forest and consists of 3 B/R, large kitchen and dining area, Rayburn stove, sun room and balcony. Shed, vegie garden and trees. There is potential here for small craft shop.

Business established four years, gardening, garden construction, tree planting, paving, etc. Price includes 4WD Land Rover table top, chainsaw, mixer, rotary hoe, trailer, wheel barrows and hand tools, includes two weeks training and advice. Business name is Batemans Bay Landscaping – \$12,000. House – \$57,000. Contact:

8 Braidwood Street, NELLIGEN 2536. Phone 044-724-222.

# Unclassifieds

There is a fee of \$5.00 for each Unclassified and we do appreciate it if you can limit your advertisement to 75 words. Please mark envelopes 'Unclassifieds' and forward payment with the advertisement.

**SHARE FOR SALE:** After negotiation with planning authorities we have recently received permission to cluster subdivide our 8 ha in two allotments of between  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  ha each, the remainder of the land being communally owned. One exciting possibility this raises is that another couple with similar interests could share the total experience of living and working together on the land. Another is that we set up one or two communal houses with a number of individuals/couples living in each under whatever physical and social arrangements suit us all. If anyone is interested in either idea we'd love to hear from you.

We are in our late thirties with two girls who attend a co-operative school. We are living on the land pending decisions regarding future arrangements but have the resources to build. The land is approximately two-thirds bush. It has the mixed blessings of power (underground) and reticulated water, a new dam and shed, the beginning of a permaculture orchard and a vegie garden. A half share would cost approximately \$38,000 but individual costs could be less depending on the sharing arrangements.

Graham & Lesley Cooke, P.O. Box 39, DROMANA 3936.

**FOR SALE:** At Eildon, outstanding 64 acres of lake frontage, panoramic, four unit development site, permits approved, ideal deep water mooring, private cove, swimming, water skiing, trout fishing, close to wilderness and snow fields, ideal stud farm and possible caravan park, permanent creek, dam, mostly cleared with small area of bush, S.E.C. on site, could exchange for home in Melbourne. Price \$47,000. Please write to:

Ed Adamthwaite, 1 Cole Avenue, BELGRAVE 3160.

**LAND WANTED:** Two peaceful vegetarians looking for land with permanent water, bush and wildlife, far away from those hassly energies not conducive to a peaceful planet. Ideally it would be situated in the coastal or mountain area of south-east N.S.W./Vic., where we can build a house. (Amenities not desired as soft technology is preferred.) We can afford between \$12,000 and \$15,000. Contact:

Carol, 20 Richardson Street, BRUNSWICK 3056.

**WANTED:** Experience in building mud brick houses. Fit 32 year old bush worker has six days a fortnight free to offer brute strength and ignorance in exchange for shelter and tucker and knowledge gained. Can rough it and will travel up to 500 km from Bathurst.

Lyn McPherson, P.O. Box 266, OBERON 2787.

**HOMOEOPATHIC HEALER**

Alma Draganjac,  
2/7 Thomas Street,  
CLAYTON 3168.

Mon. - Frid. 10 - 6. Phone 544-9228.

**REGRETFULLY FOR SALE:** Cottage on one acre, four miles from Deloraine, Tasmania. Open plan lounge-dining-kitchen with pine lining, open fires three bedrooms, all conveniences, outside workshop, sheds, pig pen, chook shed, good flat ground, high boundary hedges, school bus route. Must sell immediately. Price \$23,000 O.N.O. Phone 003-622-718.

**FOR SALE:** Fifty-three acres of bushland, twelve miles from Launceston, Northern Tasmania, on St. Patricks River (pure permanent water. Twenty acres suitable for clearing, remainder abundant in stone for building material, also ironstone gravel pocket suitable for road surfacing. Very secluded and abounding in wildlife. We would prefer buyers who are environmentally aware. Price \$21,000.

Phil and Sue Heath, C/- Post Office, NUNAMARA 7257 phone 003-993-327.

**FOR SALE:** Situated between Gympie and Maryborough, 66 acres on the Sunshine Coast hinterland. The land is mostly hilly, 16 acres of flats, magnificent views, good access and backs onto national park. Excellent soil and grazing; permanent water is supplied by two dams, one of which

is fed by a creek which passes through the property. Also some underground irrigation.

The house is big, rambling, partly renovated, solid Colonial with four bedrooms, family/rumpus room, sun room, library/study, lounge, storeroom and large workshop. The kitchen has both electric and wood stoves and a walk-in pantry. Also included are power, phone, septic, school buses and a daily mail service.

Outhouses include a large machinery shed, double chook house, bail and very solid cattle yards. There are numerous trees planted including citrus, banana, mango, paw paw, coffee, apple, macadamia nuts and date palms as well as heaps of pineapples and passionfruit. Also an old but usable farmhouse, smokehouse, feed storage and compost bins. There are also a few pieces of old time farm machinery for those interested in restoration. The price is \$75,000. Contact:

Lee or Tony Duddy, M.S. 221, TIARO 4650 or phone 071-292-253.

**COMMUNITY SHARE FOR SALE:** Mandala, a community farm, has a share available. There is 3 sq. self-contained cottage with hot and cold running water, small gas fridge and stovette, combustion stove, bathroom with small bath and basin. Also a larger 18 sq home with verandahs, about half finished. Some sandstone rocks on site but basalt rocks available nearby to infill walls. Septic tank installed but not connected, earth closet (loo) outside, chook shed, herb garden and many native shrubs planted. Situated on hill surrounded by bush with views over the farm and permanent creek. There is a community tractor and implements available. The farm is in a quiet valley near Cunningham's Gap and not far from Warwick. We are asking \$18,000 and would negotiate our petrol generator as we don't have electricity. For further information please phone or write:

David and Gale Ward, P.O. Box 47, WARWICK 4370 ph.076-661-122.

**MASSAGE:** Thanks, to you people that got in touch after my other ad - for those that are still pondering on ringing, I've moved to Cremorne, but the phone number's still the same. I forget to mention that a massage takes about an hour and I charge \$15. One thing - I love doing massage because it's such a nice manner of communicating - you don't have to use your brain at all, you just feel! Consequently, I'm afraid I get very resentful when people request 'extras', or whatever other delicate terms they use. Massage is a beautiful medium of communication, relaxing and healing. I appreciate it when others respect it the way I do, instead of misinterpreting. So, if you're in the market for loving but *straight* massage, please ring.

Linda Haig, phone 02-904-706.

**FOR SALE:** Thirty-six acres rich Gunalda Mountain soil, suitable paw paws, bananas, tropical fruit, macadamias. Good views. Within half mile of electricity and bitumen road. Ideal for holiday home or hobby farm. Some original scrub. Price \$25,000.

One hundred and fifty-eight acres of rich mountain soil. Comfortable four B/R home, farm sheds, five dams (four million gallons), irrigation plant. Suitable avocados, paw paws, bananas, macadamias, small crops. Five miles to country store, one mile school bus, five miles to Bruce Highway, 25 miles to Gympie. All weather road. STD phone, electricity connected. Price \$150,000.

N. Blair, M.S. 279, GUNALDA 4570. Phone 071-846-195.

**LAND FOR SALE:** In Queensland, 1,512 acres of undeveloped country, just 14 kilometres from Childers which has a population of 2,500 and is halfway between Maryborough and Bundaberg. The land has plenty of natural springs, permanent water and dam sites. Boundaries are Isis River and Oak Creek. This land has plenty of potential and is ideal for Grass Roots people. Selling price is just \$150 per acre, a total of \$226,800. For further information contact:

Ruth Doneman, 3 Hawkins Drive, BARGARA 4670 phone 071-792-525 or Laureen Rogers, phone 071-715-557.

# Unclassifieds

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**HOME FOR SALE:** Mud brick and timber, has slow combustion stove for cooking and hot water plus pot belly for warmth. Solar lighting, tank and dam water. Fenced garden area, chook run, three and four year old fruit and nut trees plus native and flowering shrubs. Sunrise Farm has 575 acres and shareholders have the use of three and a half with the rest being used for community projects. It is \$1,000 per adult to become a shareholder. The community is mainly vegetarian and not into drugs. Prospective buyer would need to become known and approved by Community so I would consider renting. I am selling for \$25,000. Further information contact:

Carmel, Sunrise Farm, BUCHAN 3892.

**COMMUNITY:** Mid north coast N.S.W. 80 ha secluded, fertile valley. Modern 8 sq homes (suit 2-4 people) and 25 sq community 'round house'. Beaches, mountains, lakes, rivers, bushwalks - many 'causes' and crafts.

After seven years hard work several members now leaving. Vacancies for optimists. The following qualities would help you to find growth and happiness living here - willingness to develop and use ordinary farm skills, reasonable expectation of, say ten years of co-operative living, looking for alternatives, 'small is beautiful', decision by consensus, non-smoking, not hooked on drugs or liquor, inner resources, wanting mental and spiritual growth in a fit body. Price is \$80,000 (negotiable) per unit to acquire shares and rights.

Phyl and Bill Latona, 'The Falls', JOHNS RIVER 2443.

**LAND CO-OP SHARES:** We are looking for families interested in joining our land co-op. We have six shares remaining of twelve in 350 acres. The land is situated near Putty, 2½ hours drive from Sydney. It features beautifully wooded mountains and grassed valleys, two permanent creeks and many small ones. Of those who already have shares there are two families with children ranging from three months to nine years. We are interested in involving more families with children, especially of school age, as we would like to start a community school. In the meantime there is a school bus which runs to the public school at Colo. The cost of the shares is \$15,000. Finance can be arranged on \$1,500 deposit. For more details write or phone:

Jenny Gibbons, 11 Norton Street, SURRY HILLS 2010. Phone Sydney 331-3479.

**ALMONDS - DIRECT FROM GROWERS:** We will supply 8 kg of first grade almond kernels for \$45 post free anywhere in Australia if payment with order. Sorry, no smaller quantities possible because postage then too expensive. Remember - a handful of almonds contains as much protein as a steak! Please write to:

A.F. & U.R. Stehlik, Orchardists, Box 234, WILLUNGA 5172.

**HANDMADE PLAIN CARBON STEEL KNIVES:** An alternative to the modern 'magic' knives of stainless steel and plastic, our knives are similar to those our grandparents treasured. They are easy to sharpen, keep sharp and have beautiful Australian hardwood handles. Over thirty standard designs are available for general and special kitchen use, butchering, hunting and skinning, wood carving, leatherwork and other crafts. We will also make knives to your own design. Please send a stamped addressed envelope for our 1982 illustrated catalogue to:

Greg and Shirley Broomhall, R.M.B. 730, WESTERN FLAT 5268.

**LAND WANTED:** We have \$10,000 to spend on our dream land and hope someone can help us. A minimum of ten acres on the south coast, mostly bush with maybe two acres cleared. Permanent water and good access would be an advantage but we also enjoy privacy. Contact:

Nigel and Rhonda Rough, R.S.D., Stradbroke 3851. Ph. 051-468-265.

**FOR SALE:** Three B/R house on 2½ acres, with large kitchen/family room, slow combustion stove. Lounge has large windows facing north, wood heater, blackwood panelling. Large workshop/garage with 3.6 m door clearance. Block partly cleared, third bush, friendly neighbours.

Ideal for those who want to try self-sufficiency but need to commute to Melbourne. Large vegie garden, many young fruit and nut trees planted including tamarillos, passionfruit, paw paw, Chinese gooseberries, herbs, berries, feijoas, guavas. Walking distance to both state and parish schools. Power, water, phone, gas. We would like to sell to G.R. folk who would appreciate the trees, large poultry run, etc. We have renovated the house and are asking \$59,500 or less if you wish to finish the painting and a few other bits and pieces yourself.

Wal and Audrey Porter, 5 Leggett Drive, MOUNT EVELYN 3796. Phone 03-736-3341.

## THE DEADLINE FOR G.R. 33 IS SEPTEMBER 3RD

**FOR SALE:** Books by independent publishers.

*The Gypsy Cookbook.* Legends and recipes for natural foods - \$3.95.

*The Gypsy Storyteller.* Stories and folklore of the Romani people - \$3.95.

*Savage of Bau.* History and adventure in the South Seas - \$3.50.

*Trooper Anislie.* The turbulence of the A.C.T. in colonial days - \$3.50.

*The Child.* An Aboriginal boy's struggle to survive - \$3.00.

*Time To Read Poems.* Poetry with a common theme, delightfully presented - \$4.95.

All available from:

Norman Featonby, Good Book Service, P.O. Box 449, ASHFIELD 2131. If you send payment with order we send books post free.

**CIRCA 1900 - AN EXCITING HISTORICAL EVENT.** Calling all 'Grass Roots' people around Adelaide. Can anyone do a demonstration of butter making or similar crafts in an Old Kitchen Display for Circa 1900? What is 'Circa 1900'? A gigantic week long festival with the theme 1890 to 1910. Already we have performances of musicals, displays both historic and/or artistic, concerts, an open air music hall (free), ragtime dance (free), fashion parade of that era and, of course, lots of stalls and hawkers are needed. How about dressing up and 'hawking' a basket of home made crafts or goodies? Only 10% of takings for Circa 1900, the rest is for you. Or just dress up and stand on a soap box and expound your beliefs. Help save some of the lovely old buildings crumbling away here.

**When:** December 5th to 11th inclusive.

**Where:** Old Bond Warehouses and Streets around Lipson Street/Divett Street, Port Adelaide.

**Contacts:** Di Angel 453-179 or Chris Spurling 458-416 or Port Adelaide Primary School 472-184.

**FOR SALE:** Stabilised earth brick building of ca. 12 squares on a 22 acre bush block in the lovely Lachlan area, thirty minutes drive from Hobart, on a sunny hillside with most beautiful view. Below the building is an established organic garden and a mixed orchard of about 250 young trees. Power and phone lines are close by and there is a school bus. We are asking \$23,500.

We also offer for sale three other blocks adjoining the above property - 7½ acres priced \$11,000, 11 acres priced \$11,500 and 10 acres priced at \$9,000. All blocks have a dam and good road access and are very reasonably priced. Contact:

K.P. Henderson, 31 Russell Road, CLAREMONT 7011.

**BUILDING BLOCK FOR SALE:** With nice group of gums, situated half mile from shopping centre at Coonabarabran, N.S.W. Ideal for someone who wants to move to the country but likes to be with people. Price: \$5,500 O.N.O. Enquiries to:

R.J. Woldram, P.O. Box 319, KYOGLE 2474.

**FOR SALE:** Rural Living. Modernised W.B. house on 12 acres, 14 miles from Gayndah. 3 B.R., large lounge, bathroom with shower and vanity unit. Town elec. and H.W.S. Bore and four rain water tanks. School bus. Price \$30,000.

Inquiries 071-611-283 or 071-611-251 Queensland.

# Unclassifieds

**MURR MADE — FOLKWEAR PATTERNS:** Since 1976, Folkwear has been reproducing traditional folk garments and fine antique clothing in its two pattern lines which are Ethnic Patterns and Patterns from Times Past. There are now forty-five patterns available and new ones are published every three months. Each pattern adjusts to fit all sizes; some for both men and women. All are printed on heavy stock and can be used again and again. Folkwear patterns are a valuable tool for sewing instructors, needlework enthusiasts or anyone eager to create beautiful and individual clothing. Use beautiful fabric or plain fabric and decorate it with the traditional designs included with the pattern, or your own creative specialties. For a free catalogue, send a 40¢ stamp to Murr Made, P.O. Box 39, DEAKIN, A.C.T. 2600.

**WANTED:** People interested in co-operative land share purchase venture. Envisaged age group, structure and locality as yet an open proposition. Final, lowish number of shareholders will probably determine an ingoing price which may require each to be of reasonable financial means. I myself, am sitting on real estate which will take time for cash conversion. This venture should best be considered as a long term, but nonetheless firm commitment. As a first step I suggest that all those interested carefully consider every aspect of their wants, document (pref. typed) and forward same to me. From this, a general consensus of requirements will emerge, followed by more communications, meetings and land searches. Return postal contributions are appreciated.

'Co-op Venture', P.O. Box 148, LANE COVE 2066.

**WANTED HOUSE TO LEASE OR RENT:** We are a young couple with three children and limited resources trying to find a better lifestyle. We would like to hear from anyone who has or knows of a few acres of land with a house to lease or rent with a view to buying, or from people who have begun or established a small community which may be mutually suitable.

Ken and Elizabeth Matsen, Beecham's Knob, WOOTTON 2423.

**FOR SALE:** One hundred and forty acres of land, half cleared and half natural bush. There is a permanent creek which supplies water to the house. Frontage to the Orara River about 250 yds in front of the house. Modern home only two years old. Electricity, phone on soon, school bus, postal delivery. Big farm shed, one David Brown 990 tractor with blade and Root Rack slasher as new, chisel plough as new. Five acres of cultivation all fenced, plus a 4 x 4 irrigation pump. Wild life and wild flowers, Xmas bells. It is 25 mins from town. All for the price of \$175,000.

Mr. I.S. McGill, McGills's Drive via SOUTH GRAFTON 2461.

**WANTED:** Male friend 29-47 years, any nationality, race, creed or colour. *Must be non-smoker.* Unmarried (children no objection). Must love children, animals, birds, lizards, etc. Interested in the S.S. life. For single woman in thirties who lives out in the bush and has goats, chooks, ducks, dog, cat and birds. Enjoys dancing, music as long as it's not too loud. Enjoys dining out, theatre, ballet, concerts, rodeos, meeting people, writing letters, reading, cooking Aussie and foreign foods, gardening, making all handicrafts, sewing, drawing, fishing, camping, bushwalking and all other outdoor sports. Member of S.E.S. and V.R.A. rescue squads. Contact:

Robyn, 'Meelekie Laloma Kamilaroi' Goat Farm, Yarram Street, BLACKVILLE 2343 or phone 067-4742 and ask for 52.

**FOR SALE:** Due to economics and too many animals I have trained donkeys for sale but they must go to good homes. They are trained to work in harness, saddle, log hauling and are very quiet and affectionate. They are the good grey variety known as Jerusalem Donkey, also one black Jericho donkey. Enquiries to:

Mrs. H.G. Adkins, R.S.D. Jubilee Lake, DAYLESFORD 3460.

**COMMUNITY SHARE WANTED:** We would like to buy a share in a community about 2-4 hours drive from Sydney. We need to be able to commute to Sydney regularly to pick up work which will be done at home. We are Lia (26) and Graeme (29) with no children as yet. We seek a place not too isolated and hope to leave Sydney soon, perhaps

renting nearby while building our own place (mudbrick?). We seek a community as it is an opportunity to live and work with people with similar ideas in a healthy environment. Neither of us eats meat, we do not smoke and we are not looking for a religious community. We have sufficient savings to spend about \$15,000 for the share of the land. Please write to:

Graeme and Lia Parsons, 32 Chatswood Ave., CHATSWOOD 2067.

**WHO'LL GO A 'ROVING?** Wee Peggy will. At less than half the price of most regular, bulkier wheels, here's a compact travelling companion that's increasingly becoming the hot favourite in the living room. Weighing 8 kg (16 lb) and standing 93 cm (37 in) tall, it features a three speed whorl, a built in Lazy Kate, a built in threading hook and both double band and scotch tension. Wee Peggy is a delight to look at and a joy to use, wherever you choose to spin. Kit \$110 excluding postage. Ring or write:

Emma Hamilton, 'Toorong', Bentons Road, MOOROODUC 3933. Phone 059-788-247. Mention Grass Roots.

**NATURAL VITAMINS, MINERALS AND HERBS:** At wholesale prices we have available:

1000 Vitamin B Complex	\$9.00
1000 Kelp 250 mg	\$7.00
1000 Herbal Slimming Aids	\$15.00

Free delivery on orders of \$20.00. Further prices and information from:

V.M.H. Supplies, 256 Balcombe Road, MENTONE 3194. Ph. 03-584-1308.

**FOR SALE:** Situated on 11½ acres, a home comprising of 2, two storied individual units of 1000 sq ft. Each has 3 B/R, bathroom, toilet, lounge, study plus mezzanine room space. These units are joined by an enclosed walkway to a large communal kitchen, lounge with conversation pit, smaller mezzanine lounge and laundry – a further 1600 sq ft. The house has plumbing for solar heating.

The land is divided into two large and one small paddock. Our shelter belt is 15 ft plus. There is running water in the back paddock. House water is supplied by artesian well. There is a large well fenced veggie garden also a 600 sq ft workshop with wood and hay storage area, a covered car port for two cars and a swimming pool. Price is \$210,000 dollars N.Z.

Here is an opportunity for two families to live together but maintain family identity in modern surroundings. Situated 5 km from centre of Masterton and 100 km from Wellington.

Perry Rowe, R.D. 6, MASTERTON N.Z.

**SHARES FOR SALE:** We are six adults and four children with 126 acres in the Strathbogie Ranges of north-east Victoria 37 km south of Benalla. The land consists of creek flats and gentle to moderate slopes surrounded by state forest, in a secluded valley. The land is mostly cleared although many stands of trees remain. Two permanent creeks and two springs provide ample water. We are working towards becoming as self-sufficient as possible through the principles of permaculture and organic farming. We have some livestock and are in the early stages of development as far as fruit and nut trees and vegetable gardens are concerned.

We are asking approximately \$11,000 for a share, which comprises an equal share in the land, stock and farm equipment. If you are interested and wish for further information please contact:

Penny and Charles Jones, R.M.B. 1435, BENALLA 3673.

**WANTED MALE COMPANION:** Middle aged widow, materially poor – pension only – seeks male companion to share work and home on a run-down 20 acre farm and home. Prefer non-smoker and non-drinker. Single parent with children welcome. Aim, to become self-sufficient using organic farming methods. Electricity, piped water and firewood on property. School bus stops at house.

N.B. Tasmania can be wet and cold in winter. All enquiries answered.

G. Osborn, P.O. Box 22, FRANKLIN TAS. 7113.



# Unclassifieds

There is a fee of \$5.00 for each Unclassified and we do appreciate it if you can limit your advertisement to 75 words. Please mark envelopes 'Unclassifieds' and forward payment with the advertisement.

**FOR SALE:** Ten fertile, cleared fenced acres in the heart of scenic N-E Tasmania. Located on the main highway 5 min from thriving country town, 50 min from Launceston. Power, city water (unfluoridated!), large dam. Solid, appealing 3 B.R. log home. Huge brick fireplace. Panoramic mountain views. Established market garden (organic) and berry farm, fruit and nut trees with busy roadside trade. Large new workshop, carports, extra room in Canadian style barn structure. Perfect balance between rural isolation and urban congestion, with proven potential for self-sufficiency and/or home style business. The selling price also includes some furniture, a gentle house cow and tractor. Beach is just 20 minutes away. \$60,000. We also have a donkey family for sale – grey jack, black jenny, and gorgeous 6 months old grey foal.

Dashley and Nancy Graham, Log Cabin, Tasman Highway, SPRINGFIELD 7254.

**FOR SALE:** New Age Books at the Learning Exchange, 26 Corfe Street, Red Rock 2456. Phone 066-492-785. Camp at Yuraygir National Park nearby (between Coffs Harbour and Grafton) and pay a visit. Or see our unique stock of books on crafts, home building, small farming, self healing, healthy cooking at The Nut House (Coffs Harbour Markets) 228 High Street, Dorrigo Crafts, centre of Dorrigo, Craftways, main street Maclean and Lake Russell Gallery, north of Coffs. Seeking new outlet in Mullum, Byron Bay or Ballina area. Casino and Grafton also possibilities. Francis Wigham.

**TO RENT:** Part of a 30 acre property at Dunolly, 15 km from Maryborough (Central Victoria). No power or phone. There is a small dwelling, tractor and implement shed which I want for my own use so a caravan or dwelling would be necessary. I am able to get up there only on weekends, about once a month.

There is a dam on the land which is mostly cleared and surrounded by state forests. Soil is quite good but the summer is hot. Small town and school 1½ miles away. Rent will be cheap (negotiable). Interested people please write or phone:

Andrew Jeffrey, 64 Balaka Court, ROSEBUD WEST 3940 or phone 059-864-848.

**FOR SALE:** Binjour Agricultural Farm. 342 acres freehold. Two blocks. Half scrub, half forest. All red soil. Suitable for growing of corn, milo, peanuts, avocado, etc. Practically frost free. Adjoining 1000 acres of cultivation on adjacent properties.

One hundred and twenty acres has been cultivated and now growing improved pastures of Rhodes, Panic and Buffel grass and a further 160 acres of virgin cultivation is available. Subdivided into eight paddocks with permanent water to each from 10,000 gallon tank supplied from bore equipped with mill. Yards. Hayshed and other sheds. Good fencing. School bus passes door to primary school approx. 4 miles with bus to high school. 240 volt electricity connected. Suitable for horse or cattle stud. Sixteen miles from Gayndah. Priced to sell at \$105,000. Further particulars phone 071-611-283 Queensland.

**CONTACT CLUB:** This club has been formed to put people in contact with others who have a particular need, for example, people looking for work on a property will be put in contact with people looking for help, those with properties to buy or share with buyers, females and males looking for soul mates. No charge is planned for this service other than \$2.00 to cover mailing costs and allied expenses. Persons wishing to make contact with other Grass Roots folk should write stating the type of contact and giving full details, together with \$2.00 to:

Contact Club, Serendip, Tilba Road, WALLAGA 2547.

**FOR SALE:** Farm of 100 acres plus in beautiful New England area of N.S.W. comprising one 50 acre freehold block, separate title freehold house block of 1½ acres plus 50 acres of Government lease. Unlimited water even in drought times. One mile of creek running through the

property also frontage to Mann River and numerous water holes. Eleven miles from Glen Innes, school bus passes front gate. Three B/R W.B. cottage, kitchen with wood stove, lounge, etc., 240 volt Lister Diesel/Dunlite power plant. Two guest cabins with wood stoves. Large shed and hen houses. Eight thousand well established three and four year old Radiata Pine trees. Orchard of mature fruit trees plus new plantings of walnuts, chestnuts, pecans, hazelnuts, greengages and peaches.

Great potential for running horses or tourists and there are plenty of alternative lifestyle people in the area. We have a genuine reason for selling. Price \$85,000. Contact:

J. McCabe, 'Clunemore', Shannonvale Road, via GLEN INNES 2370. Phone 067-343-520.

**FOR SALE:** Good quality home made Herbal and Therapeutic Skin Care Products by mail order. Send a S.A.E. for our price list and catalogue. These products are cruelty-free, approved by Beauty Without Cruelty and Animal Liberation (Qld.). They contain no petroleum products and are made from freshly made herbal extracts, cold-pressed oils, beeswax and natural preservatives. They beautify the skin by adding tone, a lustre, texture and elasticity. We have vegetable soaps – honey and bran, skin creams, skin fresheners and cleansers, massage oils (dilute and concentrate) and healing cream with comfrey.

Meltone Herbal Products, P.O. Box 489, AHERTON 4883.

**FOR SALE:** Having just moved out of our house in Derby (N-E Tas.) and onto our bush block we would like to sell the house. Price \$3400. If you are interested write to us and we will send you photos and information.

Peter & Diana, C/- Derby Post Office, DERBY 7254.

**WANTED:** People who love trees and mountains. We have found 130 acres of beautiful land 50 km from Wangaratta and Benalla. It is uncleared and rises 1000 ft from a river to the top of a hill. It is covered with beautiful peppermints, candlebarks and manna gums.

We are Robert (21), Lisa (21) and Tess (9 mths) and have been looking for land like this since Tess was born. The land is priced at \$17,000. We have about \$8,000 and would like to share or divide the land with anyone who would love the bush as we do. We are currently living in Ballarat and building a mud brick house at Linton. If you are interested please ring 053-391-245 or write to 1302 Gregory Street, WENDOUREE 3355.

**FOR SALE:** Gippsland – 50 acres cleared but lovely shade trees remain. Three B/R nicely renovated home, carpeted, open fireplace, pine ceilings. Two spare rooms on verandah. Self-contained bungalow needs some renovation. Double garage, machinery sheds. Fifteen minute drive to surf beach and major city. Two dams, plenty of tanks. Sunrise and sunset views. Gas stove, electricity. Price \$78,000 negotiable. Phone 051-497-302.

**FOR SALE:** In Mitta Mitta valley, N-E Victoria, 110 acres, secluded, partly cleared, remainder light bush, all weather road, 1½ km bitumen, S.E.C., phone, adjacent breathtaking views, proximity to snow resorts, fishing nearby rivers, Dartmouth, Lake Hume dam. Development prospects. Priced \$32,000. Phone A.H. 060-241-943.

**HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS:** Mill your own stone ground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark Stone Flour Mill. 'Endorsed By Housewives Association'.

'True Grist Barley Grain Beer' we guarantee 100% satisfaction and success in using our Home Stone Flour or Grist Mills to mill fresh barley grain grist for the best 'Home Grain Beer' in the world made at home!

Write for your local agent's address and send two 27¢ stamps for our catalogue to:

Kevin and Bronwyn Rogers, Australian Retsel Distributors, P.O. Box 712, DANDENONG 3175, our office 16 Pinewood Avenue, NORTH DANDENONG, or telephone 03-795-2725.

# Unclassifieds

**HORSE FOR SALE:** Clydesdale mare 11 years old, Donside Heather Dru 13511 reg. C.C.S.B. Heather has had six foals, is a reliable brood mare and is in foal to multi champion Box Valley Rising Star, due November. She is active, sound and fit, very quiet and has worked in a team. Price \$2,500.

D. & P. Lea, Uriarra Clydesdale Stud, R.M.B. 125C, Pierce's Creek Forestry Settlement, A.C.T. 2606 phone 062-881-083.

**FOR SALE:** We have for sale 84 acres at Lockwood, five miles from Bendigo, Victoria. It is off a quiet road, secluded, yet close to services. The land is undulating with lovely views. Approx. 35 acres is cleared, the balance lightly timbered with wattles and gums. The soil is loamy with some rocks on the slopes. We have built two mud brick dwellings, one 30 x 15 with cement floor, gas stove and fridge, 12 volt lighting. The other is smaller with a mud floor. Three excellent dams on the property - water is no problem. In three titles - 67, 5 and 11 acres. Price is \$34,500. Please write to:

Kieran Thomson, Boyles Road, LOCKWOOD R.S.D. 3551 or phone 054-353-405.

**FOR SALE:** For a sharing, caring couple we have next to us 2¼ acres for sale 3 km from Nimbin N.S.W. Although a small block it has excellent soil, a large pond and a permanent stream. School bus, power, phone, town water right here. Rainfall 90 in p.a. A lovely situation, needs trees planted. Price \$18,500.

Bruce and Joan Guttormsen, Lot 18, Gungas Road, NIMBIN 2480. **FOR SALE:** We have 40 acres of superb land for sale in East Gippsland, Victoria. The soil is fertile and the river, which forms the boundary on one side, flows clearly, rapidly and permanently. There is no settlement upstream. It is quite isolated, surrounded by state forest; the nearest neighbour five miles away, Bairnsdale two hours. A 4 wheel drive is necessary for the last part of the road then you have to walk for 20 minutes to the block. A bulldozer track could be built to provide easier access. The land is all cleared, gently undulating to flat with a small hill in the centre. There are a few old fruit trees and numerous blackberries. Structures include several small tumbledown stone sheds and a three room log cabin. This was built over a hundred years ago and the walls are as solid as the day they were erected. The third room (the extension) was added prior to 1888. The roof is shingled and badly needs attention but overall it could easily be made habitable. There is an enormous stone fireplace. We are too far away to give it the love and attention it deserves. We are asking \$26,000.

Dael Allison and Rick Haughton, P.O., MACMASTERS BEACH 2251. **THE SPARROWNAUTS:** This is a story about a group of travellers who journey into outer space on the backs of overgrown birds commanded by the Sparrowman. They begin to search for the Spirit of Truth and visit the Grand Astrologer, the Universal Zoo, the Cosmic Drummer, the Universal Playground, Adam and Eve, a stranded astronaut, the Universal Lighthouse, Melchizedek and others. For a copy of this privately printed work of fine literature send \$5 to:

Robert Martin, 42 Northcott Road, LALOR PARK 2147.

## THE DEADLINE FOR G.R. 33 IS SEPTEMBER 3RD

**FOR SALE:** Soybean seed suitable for Southern Victoria. \$2 for 25 g. H. Hooper, Post Office, BROWN HILL 3350.

**COMPANION WANTED:** Woman 43, would like to hear from a man who likes trees, tree planting, gardening, cattle, dogs and general good country life. Write to:

Diana Desic, Graces Road, ARGENTS HILL 2449, ph. 065-644-043. **MEMBERSHIP VACANCIES:** There are some membership vacancies in Bundagen, costing \$3000 each. Bundagen is a unique project on the scenic north coast of New South Wales near Coffs Harbour. We have 600 acres of beautiful beachfront land surrounded by forest and incorporating the Bundageree headland and stands of rainforests. It is of strong conservational and Aboriginal significance. We have over 200 members who share a desire to build a community based on interpersonal harmony, environmental responsibility and economic

independence. The land is in a high rainfall area and some agriculture has already commenced. It is intended that all development shall take place in a carefully planned way. Some members do not wish to live permanently on Bundagen but all wish to save an irreplaceable part of the environment and to participate in this exciting social development. For further information please send your address to:

Lousie Voigt, 682 Old South Head Road, ROSE BAY NORTH 2030.

**WANTED:** Family to live on south coast N.S.W. on 300 acres of mainly forest land, forest frontage, tidal river edge, ten minutes boat to large tourist town, twelve miles road. Primitive conditions. No electricity, good soil, water, phone. Your caravan or ours. Prepared to help build own accommodation, stone mud or timber. Free in return for some help. Craft markets handy. No fanatics or drugs.

J. & B., 22 William Street, OAKS ESTATE A.C.T. 2620.

**SHARES FOR SALE:** We have three shares for sale in our 800 acre property situated south of Woodburn on the north coast between the Pacific Highway and the sea. Enjoy living in an environment of eucalypt forest, bush and heath country surrounded by abundant wildlife, still in easy reach of untouched beaches and fishing. There is a lagoon with permanent water, pond, a house which can accommodate two families, shed, generator, tractor and sawmill for cutting our own house timber. One share costs \$14,000 and entitles a shareholder to private use of ten acres, right to build a house on it, part owner of approx. 600 acres land which is held in common, use of all existing facilities.

We are allowed to build eight houses at this stage. Two families live here at the moment - one on their site and the other in one part of the existing house. In the future the house will be used as a community centre when everybody has built their own house. We aim to work towards becoming more self-sufficient using permaculture principles, organic gardening, solar energy, etc. For further information write to:

Serendipity, C/- Rosemary Zillig, P.O. Box 8, WOODBURN 2472, phone 066-822-365.

**WANTED:** Active, art minded couple or mother. Limit two rosebuds. Share or start own enterprise. Mediocre in all aspects of life. No matter if own transport or furniture. We have available flat, four rooms separate, electricity, town water, on 2½ jungle acres. Situated 20 km Maitland, 50 km Newcastle, 2 km to highway, shops, bus, school, swim Hunter River, 3 km to railhead. We keep bantams (free range), five colonies bees. We grow pine, fruit tree seedlings, medic herbs, asparagus, organic vegetables, Xmas trees and Elsie makes dresses and dolls. I build pine furniture without nails, glue or screws, paint in oil and frame. Sell all articles successfully. I am building with self quarried sandstone and own pine on our lands.

Side with us - we live our dream - so can you! You need no capital and will have no regrets. You need guts to doze your way along with us! Write stating birthdays to:

Elsie and Manfred Wuellner, 85 Wyndham Street, GRETA 2334.

**FOR SALE:** Spirulina Survival Food: 100 tabs \$8.50 plus 70¢ p. & p. 200 tabs \$16.00 plus 70¢ p. & p. 1000 tabs \$65.00 plus \$2.00 p. & p. (each 500 mg). ½ kilo bulk powder \$62.00 plus \$2.00 p. & p. Bee pollen 450 gm Forest Marri \$11.00 plus \$2.00 p. & p. Ginseng Siberian 100 x 360 mg capsules \$8.95 plus 70¢ p. & p. or 59 ml Spagyric Extract of Ginseng \$3.95 plus 70¢ p. & p. Royal jelly with Don Quai Spagyric Extract 59 ml \$7.25 plus 70¢ p. & p. Complete information package/colour catalogue available send 80¢.

Cosmic Enterprises, 192 Hawkesbury Road, SPRINGWOOD 2777. Phone 047-541-413.

**LAND OR CO-OP SHARE WANTED:** (N.S.W. or Qld.) We (man, woman and 4 month old boy) will be travelling north from Sydney in next couple of months and hope to contact people before leaving to arrange to meet them and see land. All offers considered. We have saved enough money already for this purpose and hope to find something on this trip. Write to:

Chris, C/- 16 Athol Street, LEICHHARDT 2040.

# Information Available

When contacting groups, associations or newsletters listed in Information Available, please, out of courtesy, include an S.A.E., and mention that you heard about them in Grass Roots.

## LOW COST HOUSING USING EARTH WALL CONSTRUCTION Proposals by Earth Building Forum.

On 27th April the E.B.F. presented the Minister for Housing & Co-op. Societies a number of proposals regarding low cost housing using earth wall construction. During the discussions the Minister confirmed his commitment to the principle of lower housing costs. The proposals put forward are in keeping with this principle. The proposals detailed in the document are:

*Self Build Housing & Earth Construction.* If you are willing to put your own time and effort into helping build your house you can save significantly. In fact, you can build a ten 'square' house for as low as \$13,000 (excluding the land).

*The Housing Commission of N.S.W. & Earth Construction.* It is likely the Housing Commission can build more houses for less money using earth construction.

*Lending Institutions & Earth Construction.* It is time the Lending Institutions recognised and supported the owner builders, after all that is the only way many people will be able to afford their own home.

*Community Projects & Earth Construction.* When used for community buildings earth construction can foster community pride and involvement.

*Mud Brick Construction.* An outline of construction methods and the acceptability of earth construction in N.S.W. at the present time.

This document is available through the E.B.F. for \$2.50 plus 70¢ postage. For more information contact:

The Secretary,  
Ian Factor,  
Earth Building Forum,  
67 Colin Street,  
CAMMERAY 2062.  
Phone 922-2461.

## SELLING IT

### A Guide on Marketing for Craftsmen

This booklet has been jointly produced by the Crafts Council of Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Industry and Commerce and concentrates on the marketing and promotion of crafts.

The booklet details —

- marketing and promotion techniques
- different selling methods

other important aspects of marketing

An added bonus within the book is a list of Small Business Agencies Australia-wide, 28 pages. Price \$1.40 plus 60¢ postage.

Available from:

Resource Centre,  
Crafts Council of Australia,  
27 King Street,  
SYDNEY 2000.

## OUTLOOK ALTERNATIVES

### Alternative Technology Centre

A new Alternative Technology Centre has been established at Oxley near Wangaratta in North Eastern Victoria. The aim of the Centre is to display working equipment, to have it for sale, and to present people with ideas that will allow a reduction in their demands on fossil fuels.

The range of displays at the Centre is constantly being increased. In a rural setting, the Centre is surrounded by farms. The Centre houses a number of displays including wood-fired boilers for central heating and a variety of heaters, pot belly stoves, an electric moped, fishing nets, 12 volt electric lighting, solar water heating, home stone-ground flour mills, compostumbler, books, a large amount of information on low energy ideas and alternative fuels.

Outside are goats, a wind generator, a Savonius windmill, chicken coop, ducks, a hydraulic ram, hand pumps, a solar pump and a solar radio, a woodlot containing five different tree species, an orchard part

trickle irrigated and part sewerage irrigated and solar water heaters. Further details are contained in the Centre's 'Visitor's Guide' available for \$1.50 posted.

The Centre is open Saturdays, school and public holidays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sundays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. People wishing to visit at other times should telephone 057-273-261. The Centre is on the Greta West Road, close to the Oxley School. The postal address is:

Outlook Alternatives,  
R.M.B.9010,  
WANGARATTA 3678.

## BUSH CORRIDORS

The South Australian Film Corporation is proud to announce that *Bush Corridors*, a film made for the Department of Environment and Planning has won a screen award at a major short film festival in the U.S.A.

*Bush Corridors* is a twelve minute documentary aimed primarily at the farming community but is of interest also to the general public. The film emphasises the necessity of retaining linking areas of natural vegetation in the rural environment. It shows the advantages for farmers of keeping natural scrub around their farmed land and the wider benefits of this also in conserving flora and fauna.

For further information contact:

Documentary Marketing,  
S.A.F.C.,  
113 Tapley's Hill Road,  
HENDON 5014.  
Phone 08-452-277.

## ROLL ON WILD RIVERS

A collection of Australian songs of today written and compiled by Dave Clark and Val Holden.

*There is nothing more depressing than seeing our environment destroyed by greed and ignorance. It is our firm belief that Australian society needs to change its direction and become more co-operative; its people more understanding towards each other, the trees, animals and every aspect of our environment. The 'Roll on Wild Rivers' song book is about this.*

Although the main theme in this song book is conservation, a number of other topical issues are depicted, ranging from urban environments through to nuclear energy and uranium mining. The book contains the words and music to over twenty-five songs and is the sort of publication that lends itself to campfire or group singing.

Price \$6.00 including postage, from:

Village General Store,  
62 Braund Road,  
PROSPECT 5082.

## PERMACULTURE

*Permaculture One* is now back in print — at last — and is available for \$10.95 (or \$12.15 posted). Also available *Permaculture Two* \$7.95 (or \$9.55 posted) and in stock again *Phoenix Seed Catalogue* \$2.95 (or \$3.90 posted) and P.A. Yeomans' *The City Forest* \$4.95 (or \$5.90 posted). Books available from:

Going Solar,  
320 Victoria Street,  
NORTH MELBOURNE 3051.

## NATURAL PEST CONTROL

There is a pest control agency operating in Queensland that uses safe methods wherever possible. They will be happy to answer any queries from people outside the area they service. (Please be sure to send an S.A.E.)

Natural Pest Control Agency,  
37 Bangalla Street,  
TOOWONG 4066.  
Ph.07-371-4341.

# Information Available

## FARMING AND AGRICULTURAL CATALOGUE

A complete thirty page farming and agricultural book catalogue is available free of charge to all interested persons. Write to:

Technical Book & Magazine Co. Pty. Ltd.,  
289-99 Swanston Street,  
MELBOURNE 3000.

## LIVING WITH INSECTS

This little eight page booklet gives an outline of the attempts being made by the Tasmanian Department of Agriculture to control pests biologically. Most of the Department's projects have involved the introduction of natural predators or parasites of pest insects. Contents include the ragwort flea beetle, lucerne aphids, insect killing nematodes, predatory mites, crop manipulation, biological control of dung and the future of biological control. Available from:

Publications Department,  
Department of Agriculture,  
G.P.O. Box 192B,  
HOBART 7001

## MIDWIFERY CONTACT CENTRE

Homebirth — Your right to choose.

- We recognise the right of parental choice as regards the birth of children
- We are interested in childbirth being as natural and normal as possible
- We aim to provide a total support system to those who choose the alternatives.
- For further information:

Midwifery Contact Centre,  
1A Shoalwater Road,  
SHOALWATER 6169.  
Phone 09-527-2033.

## WOOLCRAFT BOOKLETS

### Handbook for Breeding Coloured Wool

The growing interest in hand spinning has created a large demand for naturally coloured wools. This booklet (10 pages) discusses the genetics of pigment inheritance in Merino and Merino crossbreds so that efficient breeding techniques can be used by interested people to maintain a black flock. Price is 50¢ posted.

### SELECTING WOOL FOR HAND SPINNING

This eleven page booklet is a hand spinner's guide to selecting the most suitable wool for a particular project. The booklet lists the common abnormalities and impurities found in wool and makes suggestions for choosing wool to suit the end product. There is a two page information table describing the different breeds with wool types and suggested use. An added bonus is a two page section on natural dyeing. Price is \$1.00 posted. The two booklets are available from:

Publications Department,  
Department of Agriculture,  
Box 1671,  
ADELAIDE 5001.

## CREATIVE TEENS

*Creative Teens* is a literary magazine for teenagers published in America. The editor has written to Grass Roots inviting its teenage readers to send over original writing, artwork or photography. Those interested are encouraged to write to the editor first and ask for the brochure outlining submission of work.

Peter Bacon, Editor,  
Creative Teens,  
1109 Gorgia SE,  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87108.

## FIRE RESISTANT PANEL FOR POT BELLIES

A screen has been designed to protect heat-sensitive walls behind free-standing fireplaces and stoves. The screen is a textured fire-resistant panel which allows the distance between the wall and the

fireplace or stove to be reduced by 75 per cent. It is available in a do-it-yourself kit and comprising of one hanging bracket, three screws and the heatscreen. Further details available from:

Hornsby Building Information Centre,  
45 Hunter Street,  
HORNSBY 2077.

## RAINFOREST INFORMATION

About fifty scientists from all over the world have written to Neville Wran, Premier of N.S.W., urging him to call a halt to rainforest logging. With permission from the scientists, the Rainforest Information Centre has published 14 pages of extracts from these letters. This document quotes from letters from Paul Erlich, Gerald Durrell and esteemed ecologists and botanists from every continent. The facts presented here show that N.S.W.'s rainforests are a world issue and this publication should prove of great importance to all interested in finding a solution to the rainforest crisis.

The publication is titled *World Scientists Write to Premier Wran About Rainforest*, (\$1.00 post paid) and is available from:

Rainforest Information Centre,  
22 Terania Street,  
LISMORE 2480.

## SOCIAL ALTERNATIVES

Vol. 3 No. 1 — August, 1982 of *Social Alternatives* to focus on Peace and Disarmament.

A special (96 pp approx) issue will be guest edited by Harry and Jill Redner of the Victorian Association of Peace Studies. It will feature interviews with Keneneth Boulding and Joe Camilleri, an article by George Lakey of the Movement for a New Society, and special accounts of the current Australian Peace Movement. *Social Alternatives* is available at \$3.25 per copy from:

C/- Department of External Studies,  
University of Queensland,  
ST. LUCIA 4067.

## DONKEYS

For those folk owning a donkey or considering the purchase of one, the following sources of information may be of assistance. Books of interest:

*Training Your Donkey* — Marjorie Dunkels  
*Donkey Driving* — V.R. Ellis and J. Claxton  
*Donkeys, Ponies and Mules* — A. Walker  
*Donkey Business* — C. Berry and J. Robinson.

There is an Australian Donkey Breed Society — annual membership costs \$12 plus \$3 joining fee. Membership entitles you to a badge, sticker, booklet on basic donkey care, a copy of the stud book plus rules of the constitution. *Breyings*, the Victorian branch newsletter is posted out monthly and *Donkey Digest*, the national magazine, quarterly. For further information on donkeys or state groups (S.A.E. please) contact:

Australian Donkey Breed Society,  
C/- Mrs. Mildred Cerini,  
'Ceriba' Donkey Stud,  
51 O'Gradys Road,  
KILMORE EAST.  
Phone 057-821-467.

## B.O.G.G.

The Brisbane Organic Growers Group is a society dedicated to the ideals of gardening without the use of artificial pesticides and fertilizers. We believe such chemicals to be damaging to the environment and to personal health. We advocate the natural methods of organic gardening, composts, manuring, mulching, fertilizing with natural materials, companion planting and biological control of pests. We liaise with many other groups, especially the permaculture movement and the natural health groups.

Brisbane Organic Growers Group,  
P.O. Box 550,  
FORTITUDE VALLEY 4006.

# Book Reviews

**THE COMPLETE BOOK OF CALLIGRAPHY** — by Emma Macalik Butterworth. R.R.P. \$10.75. Soft cover, 160 pages, English.

Calligraphy is the art of fine writing. It is the style of writing epitomised in the manuscripts of the Middle Ages and which developed simple, basic handwriting to a highly decorative, individualistic art form. Over the centuries however, it gradually slipped from favour. Today it is virtually a lost art but with the renewed interest in past crafts and the availability of books like *Calligraphy*, it is hoped more people will rediscover the pleasure of such time honoured skills.

The book is divided into seventeen chapters, each examining in detail one of the many facets of this craft. Chapters look at such areas as calligraphic nibs, scripts, basic lower and upper case letters, illuminated and ornamental letters, layout, colour, manuscripts, framing and more. Each chapter is broken down into two parts, the first looking at the materials involved and how to use and maintain them, and the second, an extensive section illustrating practice techniques with back up exercises. The accompanying diagrams are easy to follow and clearly labelled.

There are still many situations today demanding original and finely executed letters and documents, especially in educational, civic and religious institutions. Those acquiring this skill can be confident they are not only helping revive a traditional art but are laying down the foundations for a hobby rewarding on creative and monetary levels. *Calligraphy* contains a thorough course in mastering the necessary skills. It is a sensibly priced book with material for both the beginner and more experienced. If you are the type of person who enjoys a well structured, disciplined challenge, this could be the book for you.

**RADICAL VEGETARIANISM** — by Mark Mathew Braunstein. R.R.P. \$8.95. Soft cover, 140 pages, American.

Mark Braunstein wants vegetarians to realise that the health of the soul is just as important as a healthy diet and that poor nutrition is not good for the soul.

The book is divided into two main sections. The first examines diet — why to avoid eating flesh and dairy products, what to eat and how to eat it and the advantages of fasting. The second half of the book is more concerned with ethical considerations — why animals have a right to live, why whoever lets animals live will live longer himself, how population growth and avoidance of global catastrophe depend on the spread of vegetarianism and why people have persisted in vegetarianism. Appended are several pages written by a former concentration camp inmate explaining his vegetarian viewpoint. As well there is a bibliography divided into seven sections including classical references, ethical treatises and recipe books.

Many readers will find the writer's style too literary, too whimsical and somewhat difficult to follow. He delights in playing with words at times — 'we slice our fruits and vegetables along the sharp edge between life and death'. Non-vegetarians may find his logic questionable. This then, for most, is not a suitable introductory book on vegetarianism. However, it will set many vegetarians thinking and could put them on the track to achieving higher consciousness.

**THE SELF-SUFFICIENT GARDENER** — by John Seymour. Adapted for Australia and New Zealand by R.K. Gardiner. R.R.P. \$22.95. Hard cover, 252 pages, Aust. and N.Z. version.

This marvellous book contains an abundance of practical information not only on gardening but also a multitude of associated topics. The author, John Seymour, explains how to make the optimum use of your land according to its size and position, improve soil quality, choose and rotate fruit and vegetable crops that will keep you in food year round and preserve the surplus produce. Interspersed throughout are many practical hints that have resulted from forty years of personal experience as a gardener.

The original edition of the *Self-Sufficient Gardener* was written for English conditions, however, this Australian-New Zealand edition has been thoughtfully adapted and edited and many of the discrepancies

found in overseas publications have been eliminated. It is an easy to read book, beautifully set out and presented and generously illustrated with drawings and diagrams that clarify the text and aid in identifying the fruit, vegetables and herbs covered in the book.

Regardless of whether you have a tiny suburban backyard or a rambling country garden limited only by your time and enthusiasm, this comprehensive book will make an invaluable reference.

**INSTANT PAIN CONTROL** — by Leon Chaitow. R.R.P. \$7.95. Soft cover, 95 pages, English.

Are you a pain in the neck to yourself? Do you suffer from migraine headaches or have a burning sensation in your lower back that will not go away? Is your solution a continuous treadmill of analgesics or do you want to jump off and find an alternative? Maybe this book holds your long awaited, safe, simple and effective solution.

Trigger point self-treatment is a first-aid technique used by applying pressure to trigger points for removing muscle aches and pains. The topics comprehensively covered when introducing the book are the actual meaning, causes, techniques and rules of treatment for trigger point therapy. The rest of the book is dedicated to explaining the function, trigger point symptoms and treatments of each individual muscle. This part of the text is richly illustrated with a diagram and photo of the particular muscle concerned. Ease of reading is highlighted by an index for both symptoms of muscle pain and individual muscles.

Instead of topping up the supplies you have in the medicine cabinet for short term relief, why not invest \$7.95 for a continuous safe source of help? As many people today suffer from postural, emotional and mechanical stress as well as muscular injury, it is worthwhile considering the information available in this book.

**WITH THEIR EARS PRICKED FORWARD** — by Joshua A. Lee. Available from 'Broomtail', R.S.D., Eaglehawk 3556. R.R.P. \$8.95 plus \$1.00 postage. Hard cover, 138 pages, American.

Books on mules are few and far between and the few that are published invariably come from the United States. One such new arrival is *With Their Ears Pricked Forward* by Joshua A. Lee. It is sub-titled *Tales of Mules I've Known* and that is exactly what it is, a delightful collection of personal anecdote type stories about the mules that have come into the author's life. Joshua Lee spent his childhood on a farm in Georgia at a time when the mules were depended upon to work the land. It is one of the most delightful books about animals and country characters I have come across for a long time. Take for instance Pender Jane, an old alcoholic mule. She was owned by a thoroughly mean and disreputable bootlegger in the days of prohibition. Although he made the stuff, he never drank it. Pender Jane, on the other hand was virtually a souse, having come by her craving from swilling on the worked-out slops from Fent's still.

*With Their Ears Pricked Forward* is an account of an era that has passed — when mules and men worked together. Mules *will* be mules, awkward, bloody-minded at times, but personalities, every one of them.

**MY DONKEY BENJAMIN** — by Hans Limmer, translation Timothy Cleary. R.R.P. \$5.95. Hard Cover, 46 pages, English.

*My Donkey Benjamin* is a delightful children's book built around a little girl and a baby donkey. Susi, the little girl and her father are out walking along the cliffs one day and stumble across an abandoned baby donkey. The donkey joins the family and the book describes the activities of the two young ones together. It is a simple story but one with great appeal for young children.

A hard cover book, it is illustrated throughout with excellent black and white photographs which are exceptional in their warmth and simplicity. I loved this little book for the positive, human qualities it illustrated — my eight year old loved it because it was easy to read with a story and pictures with which she could identify. Excellent value and equally suited to pre-schoolers or early readers.

# Book Reviews

**THE VEGETARIAN ADVENTURE** — by Karen Meyer. R.R.P. \$7.50. Soft cover, 144 pages, Australian.

'In our society where processed foods, take-away food and quickly prepared meals are becoming the norm, it is easy to be tempted and stray from the 'good food' path. However, once a commitment to good health has been made, rejection of junk foods and food additives in favour of nutritious foods develop and a whole new style of eating presents itself'.

This book is exactly as the title describes — a vegetarian adventure which explores this whole new style of eating. There is a wealth of simple but delicious recipes and food ideas which will inspire even the most hesitant or indifferent cooks. Recipes for tasty soups, creative, substantial main meals, attractive salads and an interesting variety of desserts, cakes and drinks are all included. The comprehensive glossary lists many of the ingredients used and provides snippets of background information along with nutritive value and alternative culinary uses.

This is a book that any cook, vegetarian or otherwise, would appreciate. It presents a new world of wholesome, appetising food that provides a zesty alternative to the mundane spectrum of processed junk food we are generally presented with in this day and age.

**THE GREEN GOURMET** — An Australian Vegetarians Cookbook — by Karen Meyer. R.R.P. \$3.95. Soft cover, 92 pages, Australian.

This book has been written not only for vegetarians but also for the growing number of people who are becoming conscious of the role good food will play in their own and their children's lives.

Each recipe uses ingredients readily available in Australia. Background information is given on all ingredients used, from the various fruits and vegetables, through to dairy products, herbs and spices. There is an abundance of unusual and tantalising recipes including such delectables as carrot and orange soup, savoury pumpkin pie, blackberry cheesecake plus many others.

The recipes are easy to prepare yet tasty and varied with the emphasis being on healthy eating. My only reservation in this respect is the author's enthusiasm for salt. Scattered throughout the book are handy hints and helpful advice concerning cookery in general, minimising waste i.e. packaging, composting scraps, etc. plus suggestions for drinks and the like. This is a delightful book that will guide those making the transition to healthy eating while at the same time, providing new and stimulating ideas for those already treading this path.

**BETTER USE OF YOUR ELECTRIC LIGHTS, HOME APPLIANCES, SHOP TOOLS** — Everything That Uses Electricity — by Michael Hackleman. R.R.P. \$12.95. Soft cover, 166 pages, American.

Will an alternative energy supply whether wind, water or solar, really suit you? All such systems are somewhat limited in their output, making more frugal consumption of electricity advisable. Is this for you? In addition, household appliances and devices are designed for relatively high voltage AC, whereas alternative energy systems favour low voltage DC. Michael Hackleman is an expert in the practical application of alternative energy systems, and author of four other books on the subject. In this book he shows us how to re-appraise our electricity consumption patterns, how to improve the efficiency of electrical devices, how to convert them to low voltage DC systems and what can and cannot be done with such systems. A substantial part of the book is devoted to an itemised appraisal of appliances and systems commonly used — refrigerators, lighting, music systems, battery operated appliances, washing machines, pumps, water heaters and many, many more.

As this book is designed for the layman it includes an explanation section on terms and concepts. However for an explanation of the basics of electricity you would have to consult a book that deals specifically with that subject. Also included in the book is a section on other components of AC and DC systems, covering switches, fuses, thermostats, inverters and the like, and an odds and ends section devoted

to technical data.

The biggest drawback to using an American book on electricity is the lack of compatibility with Australian systems and regulations. Before attempting to modify any appliance, it is essential to be fully conversant with Australian systems and safety precautions. It is rare for a day to pass without us using electricity yet most of us understand little about it. This book leads to a better appreciation of electricity and electrical appliances and thus will benefit not only those considering or choosing an alternative energy supply but all who wish to conserve electricity.

**THE BOOK OF THE DONKEY** — by Robin Borwick. Available from Broomtail, R.S.D. Eaglehawk 3556. R.R.P. \$29.95 plus \$1.50 postage. Hard cover, 256 pages, English.

There was a time when the donkey had little status. They were used by London costermongers to pull carts loaded with vegetables, on the holiday beaches to give children rides (I had my first ride ever on such a donkey — as did many other people) and in large horsey families for the youngest member to learn the very basics of equestrian arts. The donkey was rarely considered more than a useful drudge; certainly no pedigrees or stud book records were kept. Even Queen Victoria's choice of a donkey for pleasure driving in her old age did little to give the donkey status. Then in 1964 the Hon. Robin Borwick changed all that. He started breeding donkeys. His Ruffs Orchard stud became famous and he was largely instrumental in starting the British Donkey Breed Society, which registered donkeys, recorded pedigrees and published stud books. He also wrote a book with the wonderful title *People With Long Ears* which became a best-seller. He followed this in 1970 with an excellent little book called simply *Donkeys* and now in 1982 has written *The Book of The Donkey*.

People who are unfamiliar with donkeys may find their increasing popularity difficult to understand. The real secret is that it is a two-way thing — not only do people like donkeys but donkeys like people. As Robin Borwick writes in his own introduction to *The Book Of The Donkey* — 'Generation after generation the donkey, in his approaches to other animals for companionship, has found man the most responsive, and man instinctively wants to make a friend out of the donkey.'

This is a well produced hard cover book copiously illustrated with excellent black and white photos. It covers every aspect of donkeys and donkey keeping, including sections on the donkey in the U.S.A., Canada, New Zealand and of course, Australia. However, it must be admitted that these sections, like the rest of the book, are written primarily for English readers keeping donkeys under English conditions.

At almost \$30, I think this is a book that will be sought more from libraries than bookshops. Its wealth of good reading and illustration will make it appeal to the donkey lover as well as the donkey breeder. All in all this book gives delightful reading for the animal lover, for if you love animals you cannot fail to love donkeys!

\* \* \*

To obtain books from Grass Roots:

1. Add up cover prices of books required
2. Add freight
3. Send total with name and address to Grass Roots, P.O. Box 900, Shepparton 3630.

**FREIGHT:** The following postage and packing rates are for up to three books:

New postage rates:

Vic./Tas.	N.S.W./S.A.	QLD./N.T./W.A.
\$2.90	\$3.90	\$4.90

All books without the publishers address are available from: Grass Roots, P.O. Box 900, Shepparton 3630.



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Grass Roots Folk,

To all the folk looking for 40 acres of fertile land with permanent water, a house and electricity for \$10,000 – stop looking. Such a place does not exist – at least, not at the price you or we can afford.

We sought such a place for a long while and in desperation almost bought a barren, worthless block of 30 acres because it was all we could afford. But God smiled on us because in our travels we discovered an obviously deserted house and inquired who owned it at the neighbouring property. We approached the owners, an elderly couple who had moved to the town (30 km away) some 20 years ago. They were amazed at our request that we rent the house, but delighted to have someone in it after such a long time. We negotiated a very reasonable rent and have now been here for three months.

We realise we are very fortunate. The owners are beautiful people and their son, with a family of his own, spent several of his weekends off fixing things that were a little beyond us. He even dropped off a load of firewood one day. The house is on 80 acres and the owners still run about 80 sheep on the property. We had to fence the vegie patch but we never need to mow the lawn! We look expectantly every day for our first egg – it won't be long now.

The local people are wonderful, they have accepted us into their community and every now and then someone drives up with some seeds or a plant for the garden or fruit from their over-productive trees.

There are several abandoned houses around the area so there must be countless numbers of them across Australia waiting for someone to give them life again. If you have limited finance but are prepared to do a bit of hard work why not try it our way? Inspect the old houses you come across (but *please* be mindful that you are on private property) and find out who owns them from neighbours or the local council. Of course, you may not get such a great landlord as ours, but country people understand the need to be on the land and most owners of such places would realise the fact that someone living in their house would stop the depreciation of a valuable asset.

**Avril and Aileen,  
'Kalara',  
MERTON 3715.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

Well, we have travelled the breadth of the land to our new home in a semi-deserted village in Tasmania. We are settling in with vegies which should be sprouting any day now, and the two goats we have acquired.

Could someone write an article on how to grow tomatoes outside in Tassie's winter? Mark is going to miss his winter tomatoes, pumpkins, etc.

**Peri Coleman,  
13 Dickson Street,  
ELECTRONA 7100.**

## Dear Grass Roots Folk,

I wish to buy a few acres, mainly bush, with permanent water, to get back to what is meaningful to me – a few good friends, growing food, art and craft and tending animals and pets. Eight and four years living with one person, two years living alone and now with a family have shaped my idea of how I would like to live with friends. I would like my own land with either good friends as neighbours or land with a few small workshop dwellings scattered over it for times of concentrated work, quiet, privacy, plus a central building for sharing and togetherness. Commitment to partner, friends, animals and garden but freedom of privacy and to 'choof off' in the van for a while because each will help out the other.

Grass Roots is a great *real* magazine – have loved it for years, the articles, the people, the way of life.

**Julie Baigent,  
R.M.B. 953,  
Nimbin Road,  
COFFEE CAMP 2480.**

## Dear Readers,

I'm the new mum of a beautiful baby girl named Leilani. During her first month, she suffered from the 'three month colic'. If there are any more mums out there whose babies suffer too here's the cure. Before feeding her, I gave her a small amount of *Acidophilus Lactobacillus* and *Biochemic cellsalt Mag. Phos.*, dissolved in a little boiled water. I still give it to her and she has hardly any upsets anymore.

I now have a request. Has anyone ever made incense and would like to share their recipe? Also where could I get seeds or cuttings to grow sandalwood?

We are living on the island, trying to start a large vegie garden. However, we are plagued by the weed nut grass. We've tried everything we've heard of, with no success and the weed keeps on coming back in force. Does anyone out there know of something that kills the weed permanently?

I've decided to start making soap. Never having made it before I am wondering if anyone could send me some recipes and lists of addresses of companies that sell the ingredients in bulk.



**Carol Krick,  
C/-Post Office,  
LORD HOWE ISLAND 2898.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

Having just looked at G.R. 29, and Neil Reynolds article on *Surviving Naturally in the Tropics*, I've been prompted to write this letter. I could not let the article pass without comment as I have lived in the tropics for 16 years and do not concur with a lot of the content of the article.

The tropics is a wonderful place to live an outdoor carefree life and bring up a family in an unpressured way. I would hate it if anyone decided against moving to the tropics after reading that misleading article. Half of the year (October to March) the weather is very humid and hot with regular heavy rain. The other half of the year is warm days/cool nights and guaranteed clear blue skies every day. Gardens flourish, although there are quite a number of bugs.

I have never heard of anyone over-eating tropical fruit to the extent described. In the mango season we eat many each day with no ill effect, although it should be noted that some people are allergic to mangoes and this becomes apparent when they have an increased contact with the trees and fruit. They come out in a rash.

It is essential to drink a lot of water particularly in the hot 'wet' season.

Ticks abound in the long grass but I have never had one latch on to me, although I do believe it occasionally happens. Dogs are particularly susceptible and require constant attention. Tick heads left in the skin are likely to fester. I have it on good authority (Dept. of Primary Industry) that paralysis ticks do not occur in the northern part of Australia.

As for malaria, isolated cases have occurred in Australia. Most have been contracted outside Australia and were dealt with promptly. The risk is heightened by the fact that the carrier mosquito breeds freely in the Australian tropics but at present is not infected with malaria.

I have not found that dysentery occurs in normal clean surroundings here more frequently than 'down south'. I fully agree with Neil about a healthy balanced diet, exercise, cleanliness and lots of drinking water, but why stress this in the tropics. I consider it vital to any person in any climate. I applaud the remedies and will try some myself should the occasion arise.

If anyone wants more information on Darwin or tropical living send them my address. I am not a fervent letter writer but will do my best to answer queries.

**Sandra Earle,  
P.O. Box 358,  
DARWIN 5794.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Fellow Readers,

I have gleaned lots of very useful information from Grass Roots and here is some I'd like to share as this problem was 'bugging' me badly. This is a simple way of controlling pests without using harmful toxic sprays.

Firstly, identify which bugs are harmful and which are your friends. Then take a cupful of the pests (any and all varieties). Put these through a blender with some water and then further dilute this at the rate of 25 gallons to 5 cubic centimetres of original solution. Half a pound of bugs will treat 74 acres at this ratio of dilution.

**Martin Cox,  
81 Paicuranga Road,  
Paicuranga,  
AUCKLAND 6 N.Z.**

## Dear Folk,

The book *Cloudburst No. 2*, mentioned by Rob and Ngaire Shorter G.R. No 30 p.104, is available from Sydney Building Information Centre, P.O. Box M33, Sydney Mail Exchange 2012, price \$7.50 plus 20%.

**L.J. Sadd,  
Bells Line of Road,  
BILPIN 2758.**

## Dear Readers,

I am buying 19½ acres in Central Victoria – very basic, no water, badly misused over the past hundred years. My dream is to rehabilitate it, hopefully on a permaculture basis. It will be eighteen months or two years before I'm sufficiently free of debt to consider a move. The time, I hope, can be used to acquire knowledge and learn skills which will be necessary for such a venture. Being 34 and divorced with a seventeen month old daughter who stays with me occasionally, I can sympathise with people who seek others to share their lives.

I believe that my first task has been to identify myself and my needs through such things as Tai chi, meditation, trying to see life – its physical, mental and spiritual qualities as equally important and inter-dependent. I don't believe it makes me sexist to say that I need someone to share my dreams and life. So if there is a caring female out there who would like to correspond and learn more about me, please write. I will be glad to hear from anyone with ideas in particular on permaculture and how it can be used by a vegetarian i.e. how to have a balanced system without animals that need to be harvested.

**Michael Hayward,  
12 Vine Street,  
PROSPECT 5082.**

## Dear G.R. Readers,

We have had an excellent season this year in the garden but it has also been ideal for the ants – they are our major problem. Not only do they carry away small seeds but they build nests around the stems of the plants and in so doing aerate the roots, dry out the soil and cause the plants to die. Mulching just makes the problem worse. It really encourages ants and slaters in unmanageable numbers – watering doesn't seem to make any difference. I have asked many people if they have a solution but no-one seems to understand that it is a real problem – the ants are in plague proportions. Do you know of a remedy? I have ordered some mint and pennyroyal to try companion planting. We tried marigolds last year but nothing came up.

**Enid Barford,  
M.S. 1109,  
MURGON 4605.**

## Dear People,

We have been hunting for information on making olive oil. John Seymour's book on *Self-Sufficiency* provided help so hope the project turns out O.K. Olive trees are common in South Australia.

**Laurel Dennis,  
GOOLWA 5214.**

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

We are looking for land to purchase in Tasmania – 10 to 30 ha of bush (uncleared land) with permanent water. If you have land in which you think we might be interested please contact us.

We'd like to thank Chris and Nancy Payne and family for the privilege of staying on their Clydesdale stud at Springton, S.A. – a worthwhile experience for anyone interested in owning and/or working Clydesdales.

We would appreciate corresponding with any Grass Roots readers who enjoy vegetarian cooking, spinning and living a simple and natural life with the view to swapping recipes, patterns and ideas.

**Graeme Pennicott & Geraldine Ingram,  
8 Mimosa Place,  
YOUNGTOWN 7250.**

## Dear Friends,

I am yet another new-comer to the Grass Roots family and really look forward to reading each publication as it is like receiving a long awaited letter from a close friend. Thanks to my loving father who knew I would enjoy G.R. and sent in a subscription for me.

What I find so interesting and helpful is the wealth of knowledge and first hand experience each member has to offer. I'm sure many pitfalls have been avoided and much help gained through G.R. readers. We have three sons and one daughter – ages two to ten – and run our own business, so have a very active lifestyle but as many of you know, not as satisfying as the thought of turning to the land. We are going to buy a property and as my husband and eldest son are asthmatics, I would like to know if any readers who are sufferers have moved away from a coastal area and found relief? Also I would like to hear from people who have bought properties, and like us, love the land but are not experienced. If you were starting over again, what would you do differently? Through your experience, what advice would you like to have been given?

Thank you for sharing.

**Irene Kirwan,  
P.O. Box 18,  
EAST GOSFORD 2250**

## Dear Folks,

We've been on our forty acres here for four years now, and are certainly enjoying ourselves more in our tin shed than we ever did in suburbia. We've divided a machinery shed into two bedrooms, lounge, bathroom and kitchen with laundry and toilet added on the end. All insulated and with lots of north facing windows. We don't have the electricity connected – we have a slow combustion stove for cooking and hot water and a pot-belly for warmth. Lights, television, electric fence and CB radio (Unit 55 Western Victoria – Channel 12 U.S.B. for anyone who cares to try) are run from two sets of 500 AH 2 volt cells which are charged by an old 32 volt Dunlite wind generator. The whole system however, is 12 volt which gives us a better range of appliances than 32 volts would. We can also use our diesel generator to charge the batteries if necessary and to give us 240 volts AC when needed for the washing machine, power tools, etc.

Most of the four years we've spent here we've had to work outside the farm. We've organized the house fencing and energy system in our spare time and on weekends. This year however, we've finally been able to really get into the vegie garden and have begun to establish an orchard. We've also put up two 75ft by 14ft hot houses which have been planted with tomatoes this year, bringing in a bit of money.

We'd like to hear from any Grass Roots readers who would care to write to us. Maybe we could help someone trying to set up an energy system similar to ours, as Alan has done all of ours himself. We'd also welcome visits from anyone interested. Keep up the good work with the magazine.

**Joy, Alan and Jason Scott,  
R.M.B. 2302,  
PORTLAND 3306.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear G.R. Readers,

We are a family of five (28, 27, 5, 3½, 1). After reading a few G.R. magazines we realise that if we tried we too, like many of you, could make a go of it in the country. One of our major concerns is the children – what happens when they are of working age? Do they go back to the city for work? We would like to hear from people who have made a go of it in the bush and their families are growing up and how they've coped. We don't know how we'd feel if it meant that later on our children would have to return to city life. It would seem such a waste if we had to return to the city for the children. Also can anyone tell us how they coped regarding building their own houses and living in sheds, shacks, etc. until the house was finished? Was there any trouble with the councils for anyone? Also any advice on rates in the various Victorian country regions for say thirty acres. Any advice from anyone is most welcome and we'd really like to hear from Victorian country people.

**Alison and Max Gibbs,  
76 Arcadia Avenue,  
THE BASIN 3154.**

## Dear People,

I noticed from letters from both Sean Adams, Naracoorte and Nancy Wright, Beaufort that both are having troubles with their kerosene refrigerators. Now, I'm certainly not an expert on them but I have lived with one for twelve years and I think I know most of the whims of this particular breed – Electrolux. They can be pretty mean at times. Anyway if Sean and Nancy write to the above address explaining the particular make and problem (sooting up of flu for example), I may be able to help.

If Nancy contacts Brandts. Pty. Ltd., 371 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000, Ph. 02-264-6651, she will find that they specialise in kero appliances – and L.P.G. of course.

**Ian White,  
P.O. Box 480,  
GOSFORD 2250.**

## Giddy,

Here's a tongue twister for you. I picked up a bottle of nail polish that I've had for a couple of years. This is what it had in it: butyl acetate, toluene, nitro cellulose, ethyl acetate, acetyl triethyl citrate, isopropyl alcohol, toluenesul fonamide, formal isobutyrate, phosphoric acid, benzo phenone. The person with the answer correct to this puzzle can gladly have the bottle of nail polish with my best wishes.

**Raelene Kranz,  
7 Lower Main Street,  
STAWELL 3380.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

I have a remedy for dogs bothered by flies chewing their ears. I have a seven year old Labrador/Blue Heeler cross bitch. Since she was a pup I have tried sprays and roll-on insecticides, being worried constantly that even though they might ward off the flies, they might harm her health. Nothing worked and fortunately her health is still good. I finally hit upon the solution. Take basil (from health food store) and make a poultice of sorts, with hot water. When cool to warm, cake this on affected part of ear. Do this in the morning and afternoon as basil will dry and flake off but the odour from it lingers on the ear for about four to five hours. In the evening gently smear on some good old Goanna Salve. My dog thanks me with her looks, after this treatment.

Also I would like to pass on my cure for nematodes to Cathi Lewis G.R. 29. I had nematodes all along the front fence line some years ago. I couldn't grow anything until I planted marigolds thickly in this ground. They grew very well. After they finished and were pulled up, I immediately worked the ground and fertilised it with foul manure. I rested it for two weeks, then planted my seeds and was pleasantly surprised to have healthy, thriving plants. I've had no problems since.

**M.D.,  
P.O. Box 2,  
BUSSELTON 6280.**

## Hullo Everybody,

Thanks to all those people who wrote me with info on donkeys. I wrote back to those with questions about k.l. but I lost one letter so please write again if you want. Special 'de ezelwandlerlaar' to you all.

**Marie & Antoinette Schrammejer,  
C/- Post Office,  
RIANA TAS. 7316.**

## Dear Readers,

Here is some advice for people who may become somewhat depressed due to living isolated. Acquire a quality transistor or valve radio with at least three or better, five, shortwave bands. For better reception use 20 ft to 30 ft of insulated soft electrical wire – tie a stick to one end of it and throw it up into the gutter or branch of a tree – the other end goes into the external aerial socket and if you have no electricity, have it adapted to run off a car battery (this is more economical than torch batteries.) Write to Radio House, Pitt Street, Sydney 2000 or Dick Smith Electronics, Mail Order P.O. Box 321, North Ryde 2113.

For the 'oldies' who may have as yet uncured backache type arthritis try Seatone tablets or capsules (made from sea shell mussels) made by McFarlane \$10.50. And I have found an interesting booklet *Bio-Dynamics*, a periodical for soil conservation and increasing fertility in order to improve nutrition and health. Address is Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening Association Inc., RD1, Stroudsburg, P.A. 18360 (USA), \$1.00 per copy, membership \$6.00 per annum. Remember folks, you *are* what you eat. For people who are isolated and like to further their education in health and nutrition write to the N.S.W. Health Society, 131 York Street, Sydney 2000 and request a list of book titles they stock.

I am looking for a share in a property/community between Brisbane and Sydney around \$5000 – can anyone help? From June to September my address will be C/- Post Office, Cairns 4870 and after that C/- Post Office Southport 4215.

**Karl Fontaine.**

## Dear Margaret,

Margaret Oag G.R. No 21 please note: if anyone wants to know what trees suit their area, contact the Forest Commission of your state. They sell trees cheaply (\$1 in N.S.W., \$1.35 in Queensland) and can give advice and help.

**Kate and Andy Thomson,  
Box 62,  
BILOELA 4715.**



## Dear Readers,

I'm a 29 year old guy and although I'm still living in the suburbs I'm saving my pennies for those few organic acres that I've dreamt of for so long. In the meantime Croydon isn't such a bad place to live (close to the beautiful Dandenong Ranges) and I make the most of our half acre by keeping chooks and growing lots of organic vegetables.

I find that by laying barrow loads of leaves, pine needles, etc. in the chook yard to a depth of about six inches and leaving them for 6-8 weeks, you end up with loads of compost for either digging straight into the garden or adding to the compost heap. The chooks love to scratch around in the material and by throwing their grain into it, it is soon broken down. One point to remember is that the first roll of wire netting around the yard should be small bird wire to prevent the leaves from being scratched out of the yard altogether.

Last week I purchased a pair of Muscovy ducks. I have found that by laying a bed of pine bark around their drinking area prevents a mud bath occurring and hence keeps their yard clean. If any readers have helpful hints on keeping Muscovies I would appreciate the advice.

**Greg O'Meara,  
295 Mt. Dandenong Road,  
CROYDON 3136.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

Thankyou to everyone concerned for such an informative and interesting publication. Because I believe so wholeheartedly in the Grass Roots lifestyle I had managed to provide this for my small daughter until a few weeks ago. We both hope to regain the peace and serenity we enjoyed in the country. I am not afraid of hard work but find that because she is not yet weaned, the prospect of returning to the bread-winning role alone, quite daunting. The experiences of home-making, gardening and caring for a few animals were far more conducive to good mothering and happy growing up.

We would both like to share our 'reason for being' with someone else or other people who need our particular abilities and friendship. I am vegetarian and do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs. Swimming, walking and cycling are activities we enjoy. Gentle soft hearted people with some practical skills are among those we would like to meet. If you write I will certainly reply.



**Mary Morrison,**  
80 Park Road,  
ELTHAM 3095.  
Ph. 03-439-5793.

## Dear Grass Roots People,

I am very interested in making my own soap and have bought some books on the subject. One of the ingredients, lye, I have not been able to obtain so far. Although you can make your own lye for a start I would like to use commercial lye. I live in Nambour so unless the supply is in Brisbane it would have to be a mail order service. I hope some home or commercial soap makers can help me.

**Denise Farmer,**  
C/- Post Office,  
EUDLO 4554.

## Dear Grass Roots People,

After many years travelling around Australia and overseas, I finally settled down in my home state of Victoria. I married a beautiful guy Alex and started to shake off the travelling bug and get back to G.R. We started to grow a few vegies in a very small backyard in St. Kilda. It was a terrific feeling seeing the first tiny shoots growing out of the ground. Watching them grow and saving them from the weeds and pests. We read as much on vegie growing as we could fit into our busy city life schedule. When the first fruits came we were amazed at the difference in taste. We had discovered the G.R. feeling.

Now four years later and in Brisbane, looking to buy a small farm, we discovered the magazine G.R. From the first glance in the library I had to rush out and buy a copy for myself. Thanks David, Meg and all contributors for a really great magazine. It will be a great help to us in the planning of our farm and in the future.

We would like to know if any reader has found a source for L.P.G. fridges? We are planning to go solar on our property but fridges are not easily suited to solar and we would find it pretty difficult to go without a fridge in the summer. Hope someone can be of help to us - we would be willing to freight it interstate if it is necessary.

**Jay and Alex Mair,**  
P.O. Box 272,  
GOODNA 4300.

## Dear Readers,

I am trying to raise W.A. banksias from seed as I have a sandy piece of scrub which grows S.A. banksias naturally. I am following the advice given to me by using sand and peat as a medium but not with very good results. I know that banksias are very susceptible to damping off but it is their reluctance to germinate which is my problem! I wonder if any Grass Roots readers could give me some tips.

So glad that you are going from strength to strength.

**Mollie Chatterton,**  
Riverside,  
LYNDCH 5351.

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

My husband, son (2 years old) and myself live in Sydney. We were born and raised here and after 26 years of this lifestyle are becoming very disillusioned with life. Five years ago we camped, working our way around Australia and they were the best two years of our lives. We have never been more healthy or relaxed and our lives are enriched twofold. We returned to Sydney when I became pregnant with Michael to obtain permanent employment to enable us to get some money together to buy some land. Living on one wage, it has been very difficult to save as we all know. However we have managed to save \$5,000 which to us is like a million dollars, but we know it's only peanuts.

We are not really interested in communal living but would appreciate hearing from anyone who could sell us some land, or any people wishing to buy land with us but live separate lives. We want to get out of Sydney so much as we hate living here and want our son - and hopefully more children - to grow up in peace with nature and not in a mad concrete jungle which lacks love, beauty and warmth, nor amongst people who are becoming too obsessed with money and material things. We would be grateful to anyone who could help us.

**Liz, Tony & Michael Zahra,**  
27 Edwin Street,  
MORTLAKE 2137.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I am 52 and enjoy writing letters. I want to write to a farmer's wife. I have three sons but half the time they are out so I need somebody to write to. I enjoy gardening very much.

**J.S. Howie,**  
R.S.D. Yorkshire Road,  
MARONG 3515.

## Dear Grass Roots Folk,

Can anybody tell me about any self-sufficient communes in Australia and how to become involved in one? I am 17 and in the third year of my apprenticeship as a bread baker. I plan to 'drop out', or rather 'climb out' of the rat-race when I finish my apprenticeship in 1984. This gives me plenty of time to suss out the various established groups.

I realise it is virtually impossible to be totally self-sufficient, but I would like to know of any communes which are seriously trying to do so. I have my own car and caravan which will be a great asset as I will be able to try out the various lifestyles and if one does not suit me (or if I do not suit it) I can trundle on without putting the other folks on the commune to too much trouble.

**Rob Reynolds,**  
C/- Redlands Caravan Park,  
Collingwood Road,  
BIRKDALE 4159.

## Dear Grass Roots People,

I thought readers would be interested in some hints I found in an old book.

Tea stains can be removed from cups and china with salt rubbed in the cup and china when damp. One treatment will be sufficient.

A lemon heated in the oven before squeezing will yield twice as much juice.

Sometimes ants invade the house and it is difficult to trace their nests to destroy them. In such cases a scattering of powdered borax where the ants collect will be found effective in driving them away.

To destroy cockroaches, mix 2 oz powdered plaster of Paris with 4 oz oatmeal and scatter on the floor. Also a few drops of turpentine sprinkled in any cockroach haunt will drive them away. If all that does not work I'd pack my bags and leave.

If anyone wants to write about their lifestyle, young or old, female or male, that's O.K. I'm interested in people and the way they live. If they have the time to write I will answer all letters.

**Marcia Tamme,**  
5 Gwyn Crescent,  
BORONIA 3155.

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear G.R. Folkies,

Thanks for a great magazine. We just finished consuming G.R. 30, after sitting up for the best part of the night – it's the only way I get to read them. Don't make them monthly whatever you do – nothing will get done!

We are a young couple with an 18 month old daughter and another on the way. We are into the alternate lifestyle, although with what we believe, a simple down-to-earth (if that's possible!) Christian bias. We were both brought up vegetarian (lacto-ovo-vegetarian to be precise) and continue to embrace that lifestyle. We've been 'country living' for the past eighteen months after a brief encounter with the 'big smoke'. I am a teacher with the state and managed to get a move 'out'. When we arrived the locals apologetically offered us an old farm house to rent – sigh! (We tried not to let our disappointment show!) So after 18 months and heaps of experience with the joys (and sorrows) of this lifestyle, we are hooked.

However our finances do not permit us to purchase the country in the area we would like, so we've been thinking in terms of a share, co-operative arrangement with like minded Christians. We do not see a move to the country as the 'ultimate' escape as we believe time for this old earth is fast running out. We do see it however, as a responsible means to an end – especially for the raising of children. Consequently our ambitions are fairly modest. So if anyone has something to offer please let us know. We would prefer something in the northern N.S.W. region but are interested in any genuine offers.

**Dave, Kerry and Rebecca Wood,  
'Karooma',  
HENTY 2658.**

## Dear Folk,

Would very much like to hear from a gentle, caring lady 22-28 years. I am 29 and work with a Victorian Government Conservation agency. I have a very deep love of the Australian landscape, wild places and creatures and admire simplicity and naturalness.

The nature of my work, lifestyle and disposition to quietness have made it very difficult to find a mate. Perhaps there is a lady who would like to eventually share my life and love of the bush. I will answer all replies with great care and sincerity.

**'Quiet',  
C/- Grass Roots,  
P.O. Box 900,  
SHEPPARTON 3630.**

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

We have recently purchased some land in Broome and hope to soon start construction of our mudbrick house. We are very interested in the Cinva Ram method and would appreciate if anyone could help us locate one for sale or the whereabouts of such a purchase.

**Jenny and Mick,  
P.O. Box 486,  
BROOME 6725.**

## Dear Readers,

For some time I have been considering 'getting away from it all' to a very out of the way area where I hold some gold mining claims in a large river. The trouble is my wife (and myself too I suppose) like some of our modern conveniences such as electricity, too much. I have thought of wind power but it seems too erratic unless costly battery banks are used. It has dawned on me to use the river for powering a generator. It is continuous, reliable and free. The problem I am now encountering is where do I find a completely submersible generator (240 volt 5 KVA). I have tried many companies and no success. I am wondering if any G.R. readers have set up a hydro-electric plant and could advise me. I would prefer to use a turbine drive too, as I feel there would be less maintenance and be less prone to damage in floods which can reach a height of 30 metres above the generator level.

**John Kersey,  
256 Milton Street,  
MACKAY 4740.**

## Dear G.R. Readers,

I am hoping to travel around selling Asian handicrafts throughout markets in the cities and country areas of the eastern states and need your help to find out what's going on where and when. So if anybody out there knows of even the smallest of markets, I'm interested. Should also give me a chance to sample the simple life and meet some G.R. people. I am looking forward to any replies. Thanks to Meg, David and G.R.'s people for making G.R. what it is. May it live forever.

**Andrew Onslow-Smith,  
22 Sunnyside Crescent,  
CASTLECRAG 2068.**

## Dear Grass Root Friends,

I would like to exchange lifestyle ideas with other readers. I am particularly interested in hearing from spiritually inclined people or groups who look upon nature as a magnificent God given gift.

I think that Feedback in Grass Roots is a reminder that 'out there' is a wonderful family of people who share the miracles of nature. Most have found that the true values in life can be found close to the land and close to the love and unity we express for our land and for one another.

If any of you are planning a journey this way please call in but do write first. I have an extra room. I would like to hear from *anyone* black, white, yellow or brown, male or female from all over the world. I have travelled all over the world myself so maybe we will have a lot in common. And too, I live alone in the country so letters are always so welcome. I like to think there are no strangers in my life, only friends I have not met.

**Joseph Sheckler,  
Box 639,  
BOWEN 4805.**

## Dear Readers,

Bill, myself and our four children have lived in Yuendumu, an Aboriginal settlement, for 7½ years now and love it. Bill is the cattle manager of the now Aboriginal owned Ngahkerlangu Pastoral Company. At last we are well on the way to moving out of the Yuendumu town area to Ngahkerlangu to set up a small community from where the cattle operation will be run. I have my heart set on building a mud brick house – much hilarity among the stockmen who assure me it will just wash away with the rain and scepticism from Bill who thinks it is just too much hard work. However, there are a few friends here offering much needed support and help and last week we finally turned out our first test bricks.

This is where I guess I feel our 'isolation'. It is only through books and magazines such as yours that I've been able to find information, although I do realise that in the early stages of the earth building movement the latter day pioneers were probably even worse off. Sometimes, though, I think it would be great to just see a mud brick house and talk to someone who knows all about it. But as I said, the books and articles in your Grass Roots are a great help and I do so enjoy your Feedback pages.

**Sam McKell,  
Yuendumu,  
via ALICE SPRINGS 5751.**

## Dear Folk,

We have recently moved into our own home here in West Toodyay. Gradually things are progressing – that includes home finishing, gardening, working and living. Before we moved here we lived in the city and had thought becoming established was easier than it is. Anyway we're enjoying what we're doing and achieving.

I am having a few problems with my baking in our wood stove. Could anyone please write and advise me of a few tips for the use of a wood stove? Also the best way to test the temperature, the right woods to use and suitable vessels in which to cook.

**Felicity and John Ranger,  
P.O. Box 201,  
TOODYAY 6566.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear All Grass Roots Folk,

A big 'Thank You' to Michael Sweeney for his courage in sharing a part of his private life with us so that he could fulfil his responsibilities to himself, to recognise and provide the opportunities and experiences necessary for his personal growth. Congratulations and *Baraka Bashad* (May the Blessings Be!) to you, Michael and Margaret.

Thank you also for publishing what one reader complained of as a 'dalliance' column'. A person with a genuine desire for the wholistic/alternative lifestyle has trouble meeting individuals with needs similar to theirs. And to judge from the response to Michael's 'application' for a soul mate, it seems we need a 'Grass Roots Introduction Bureau' as well! May I head the list? I am 46 years old, with a lovely self-supporting (city), hard working son living in his own flat and two beautiful daughters aged 13 and 14 living at home with me. I'm deeply into amazing Eckankar, am not religious but well aware of myself as a spiritual being as well as a body and mind, and a practical, hardworking mother/homemaker. I am also a part time amateur artist, poet, composer, potter, sculptor and college student of the arts. I am a full time social dropout in attitude, very much a free individual on the inner, enjoy my own company and of course, seek the natural life with the right companion.

In reply to Chris and Jody Heald (G.R. No. 29), there's another side to every coin, you know. Some people are genuinely hard-up and unable to escape the ratrace. Although I had ten years experience in bacteriological research, metallurgical analysis, cancer research, nursing and school teaching before I married and started a family, I'm now considered unemployable because I have no up-to-date qualifications, no recent experience, have been out of the work force for too long - 23 years - and am 'too old' to be worth employing. Of the 100% T.E.A.S. I received while studying for the Associate Diploma in Applied Arts and Sciences, the government retrieved 75% in various ways and I was left with petrol money only to travel to college (1980 and 1981). So unfortunately I cannot save enough to buy my own bit of heaven. The only way, as I see it, to break free is by share working, buying my land by way of a small rent/purchase weekly repayment, or a combination of work/rent, share work and paying with any share of profits, or marriage - defacto or otherwise. Any other suggestions, folks?

One other question - does anyone know anything about 'shave grass'? Could be the name given by Indians of America to one of their herbs, but it is written about at length in *Herbs, The Magic Healers*, by Paul Twitchell and published in America.

**Margaret Bromley,  
127 Orrong Road,  
LATHLAIN 6100.**

## Dear People,

In Grass Roots No. 30 there was a letter regarding washing and ironing with a 12 volt lighting system. To run an iron off your 12 volt batteries would probably draw too much current to do the batteries any good, whether you were using an inverter to supply a 240 volt iron, or the batteries direct to supply a 12 volt iron, if such a thing was available. There are probably three options available. One is to use an old flat iron heated on the top of a wood stove. As for the second, I remember in days gone by, advertisements in country papers for petrol irons which worked in the same way as pressure lamps. I am almost sure they were made by Colemans. The third is the one that I think I'd be opting for. Purchase a 240 volt petrol generator and run a normal iron off that. Make sure that the generator has a capacity well in excess of the iron's demand, otherwise the generator will wear out very quickly i.e. for a 1800 watt iron I would suggest a 3000 watt generator, not a 2000 watt one. You will find that although you may not want to do so at this stage, you will use the generator quite a lot.

Washing using a machine would also be hard on 12 volt batteries, but would be possible though I would not recommend it. A 240 volt machine could be run off a generator, perhaps at the same time as you were

ironing. Another way to do it would be to fit a petrol motor onto the washing machine and run it directly from that - a common method in days gone by. It would also be possible, though not very convenient, to use a windmill such as a Savonius rotor, to drive a machine. A wood fired copper would do the trick also.

**Andrew Blair,  
R.M.B. 9010,  
WANGARATTA 3678.**

## Dear People,

I am a G.R. beginner, having lived in the city all my life. I think that it would be helpful to many people if some sort of article could be written on how to survive those first few vital months on your new land. Things that could be covered might be, financial and legal aspects of buying land, what are the most important tools and equipment needed for that early survival, what to do first in order to quickly gain a basic level of self-sufficiency before you starve or run out of money. Perhaps some readers would like to give their own accounts of how they survived their first days on the land. Also, are there any good books available along these lines covering those first few months? I realise that every situation will be different, but there must surely be some advice which would be useful in all situations. Keep up the good magazine.

Referring to Michael Sweeney's letter from Taradale. I say good on you for having the gumption and honesty to write about your need for a companion. I hope you and your new wife will be happy.

I would love to hear from anyone who lives near me who is a fellow G.R. Reader, and possibly meet them for mutual sharing of support and ideas.

**Wendy Cochrane,  
8 Lord's Avenue,  
ASQUITH 2078.**

## Dear G.R.,

Instead of adding water or oil to the blended peanuts when making peanut butter, use the freshly squeezed juice of a couple of oranges. It's best used within a few hours but keeps O.K. in the fridge. It goes great with honey!

**Dave & Kerry Wood,  
'Karooma'.**

## Dear Readers,

We now live in a 'bush shed, made out of bush poles and galvanised iron and anything else that I can find that looks useful. Very little money has been spent on it which makes it more interesting and a challenge when we want to do something. We don't mind at all living without the mod cons of life but we do use gas a lot - something we would like to change.

Have built my chook shed and I am looking forward to having the run finished when I can try out the ideas on natural poultry keeping. My compost heap has a few very healthy paw paw trees growing in it. The ones I *tried* to grow were not a success!

Would love to hear from anyone who has solved the ironing problem i.e. ironing without electricity. Apart from doing none at all (a tempting thought) I have not come across an alternative. We have to at least iron school uniforms and until I can replace all clothing by permanent press (or good clothes at least) I have to iron. At present I have a very kind neighbour. I iron at her place and I still go into town to wash.

Terry seems to be on an economy run at present - goes to work bare foot. Marvellous how the socks have no holes and shoes don't wear out. Will be interesting to see what happens when winter sets in. Of course, if he had been wearing shoes he wouldn't have broken a toe running down the drive one morning. Kicked a small tree stump and had a very miserable two weeks. There was a time when he would not walk onto a building site without steel capped boots.

**Jeanie & Terry Hore,  
Box 52,  
CABOOLTURE 4510.**



# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Folk,

Somebody in Feedback, G.R. 30, was asking for ideas for using old water tanks. Here are two. We tipped an old, fairly large tank on its side, cut a piece out so that it would lie flat on the ground, held it in position with rocks or heavy pieces of wood and used it as a sheep shelter. We have very cold windy winters here in the highlands and have no fully grown trees on our land so far, so the tank provides shade in summer and a windbreak in winter. We also store wood for the stove in a smaller tank tipped on its side.

**Maureen Leslie,  
P.O. Box 98,  
YEA 3717.**

## Dear New Zealand Grass Roots Readers,

I am looking for a lady named Glen Piper who lived in N.S.W. a few years ago and was interested in a property called Wyaliba, which is near Glen Innes. I would love to hear from her as I have some photos of hers that she left at my mother's place in Perth a few years ago. I would like to return them and also let her know what is happening on Wyaliba.

**Nonie Williams,  
C/- Post Office  
BURRINGBAR 2480.**

## Dear Readers,

If there are any aspiring owner builders in the Bendigo region who wish to learn more about mudbrick and alternative building then they would be welcomed by the Bendigo Homebuilders Club. The aim of the club is to give mutual assistance in construction and to purchase cheaper materials through bulk buying. Meetings are held monthly at members homes and there are no costs involved apart from time. There are over twenty families in the club so far, but we need more members. Even if you are not contemplating building immediately it is advantageous to join early to gain experience in construction but more importantly gain 'hours' that can be repayed to you when you build. Feel free to phone 054-395-406 or write to us.

**Don and Marg. Butler,  
C/- Post Office,  
MANDURANG 3551.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for such a 'down to earth' magazine. I am a 23 year old female who would love to live an alternative lifestyle but will have to wait until I find my partner to share it with (plenty of time yet), but at the moment I am fitting out a 30 ft bus with intentions to travel the country areas away from the big cities. I have been doing bar work which is a job you can find almost anywhere but I will have a go at anything. My biggest problem is my two kids (four legged ones), two beautiful Weimaraners. Can anyone tell me if they have had trouble travelling with pets. Do small country caravan parks allow pets 'under control'? I couldn't leave them behind because they are part of me. Also I'm restoring an old sulky. Can anyone help me with a sulky bell?

Here is a recipe for an overweight dog. Quarter boiled cabbage with a couple of added beef cubes.

**Sue Ehret,  
21 Denham Street,  
BRACKEN RIDGE 4017.**

## Dear Grass Roots and Readers,

You have a wonderful magazine - my daughter gave me my first copy which I really enjoyed as I have owned a few farms and milked 53 cows twice a day, made my own butter, bread, cheese, had a vegie garden, dried my own herbs, fixed fences and bred Murray Greys - beautiful beasts. My properties were on the Darling Downs where I grew all feed crops and grew my own seed sprouts. One thing - don't try eating millet sprouts. They are poisonous to humans and animals alike.

The best way I know to use seaweed and kelp is to dig a trench 18 ins deep and 18 in wide, fill with straight seaweed to within 3 in of the top and cover with soil then plant any seeds or plants and water every

second day. We grew wonderful vegies and pumpkins. The smell is very high until trenches are full owing to rotting sea creatures in the weed. It rots down faster if a layer of chook droppings is placed on top of the seaweed.

I read with interest the letter written by P.H. Moore in G.R. No. 30 p.4. about Aloa Vera. I use it on cuts, scratches, blisters and on the skin. I have found it works wonders in healing. I split the leaf open and scrape the juice into a jar and use it on my face, arms and legs after my bath at night. Don't get any juice in your mouth - it is very bitter.

**Another Country Bumpkin,  
KIRRA 4225.**

## Dear Friends,

Has any G.R. reader any information on an Australian company who makes steam engines?

Also can any reader advise us on a way to convert old kero fridges to methane gas, a by-product of the anerobic generator?

Confirmation - Neil had a wart on his hand, a small sliver of garlic, a band-aid and in ten days, no wart!

I am an ex-chef and, such as my limited knowledge allows, I'm willing to impart all and any information to all who care to write. My experience is basically French, English, Hungarian and Malaysian. With very few healthfood recipes at my disposal I'm forced to improvise so I'm open to suggestions and recipes.

Has anybody any idea where we could buy a 5 KVA - 10 KVA generator, secondhand? We haven't much money and we don't want the motor, just the generator.

Ten years ago the 'earthy' people were called 'Hippies' and other detrimental names. This is all changing. Grass Roots, of all the 'earthy' magazines I've read, is an important sociological influence in that change, where other magazines haven't the all important Feedback-Linkup. Congratulations Meg and David and the whole G.R. family.

**Justin, Janet & Neil,  
Post Office,  
TARA 4421.**

## Dear Meg, David and Readers,

Thank you for your article on homoeopathy. I found it most interesting because I have been considering studying homoeopathy for some time. However I have a couple of queries and I am wondering if readers can shed some light on them. Firstly, what are the differences, pros and cons of homoeopathy compared with naturopathy?

Secondly, there are now a number of colleges throughout Australia where one can study these topics. Prospectuses show quite a range of courses and are somewhat confusing. Could readers give me their thoughts regarding which courses are the best and which colleges offer the most recognised credentials? I am very interested to hear of your experiences.

I have 60 acres near Denmark, W.A. which is covered in lush bracken and blackberry. Any ideas of how to eradicate these plants permanently?



**Paul Harris,  
36 Travers Ave.,  
ESPERANCE 6450.**

## Dear G.R. Readers,

Here is a poem I found in a book about China. I really like it and think you will too.

*PEASANT SONG*

*At sunrise to work*

*Sunset to rest*

*Drinking from a well I dug*

*Eating from the fields I plough*

*The emperor and his might — what are they to me?*

*Anonymous.*

**Debbie Shannon.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear Grass Roots People,

Settle down for a good laugh! We are over the moon because we have just bought our suburban block. Bought mind you, not sold! Fifty-five by two hundred feet of our and the building society's Australia. After six years of flat life you'd be pleased too. Squirm a bit more. It has an in ground swimming pool. No suggestions of filling it with trout thanks. Seriously, we are into the G.R. way of life but think we are starting sensibly by starting small. We are both working full time as High School teachers.

We've been reading Grass Roots and like minded books for some years. Tony is the practical one and I (Rose) am the dreamer and planner. To date we have fenced our property, planted a dozen native trees (it was treeless), built a chook house/run which I painted National Park loo green, planted all my pot bound herbs, bought our chooks and cleared a six foot high jungle of clinging, twining, rampant morning glory. It should be declared a noxious weed.

Does anyone know a permanent organic solution for morning glory eradication?

Would some fellow G.R. suburbanites be interested in writing to exchange ideas on self-sufficiency within our scope?

**Rose & Tony,  
7 Chenhall Street,  
WOONONA 2517.**

## Dear People,

I have been reading your magazine from the first issue and depending on my moods, alternate between annoyance and downright envy! It seems that so many people want the same thing yet have no money to pay for their dreams. May I give a word of warning? You get only what you pay for and some of the land now being offered by unscrupulous real estate people as ideal for self-sufficiency, is usually far from it. The soil is fit for nothing and will mean only heart break for the inexperienced. Also the price of land is being forced up in these areas merely because they are being promoted as a Grass Roots mecca. Please, look before you leap as anything can sound good in a written description. We spent six years in Queensland and there again I would advise people to live there before making the break. Land is very expensive, water is even more vital than in the southern states and one has to do battle with ticks, all sorts of creeping crawlies and the heat. No, I am not talking about northern Queensland but the coastal hinterland. It cost me a small fortune in vet's fees for tick poisoning on my dogs and I was extremely careful and searched daily for them. At one stage we planned to build a stone house but the council just about had a fit. We could build if we had cavity brick walls inside the stone outer! Needless to say we forgot the whole idea. That's another thing, find out from the councils if they favour mud brick and stone homes - most don't. Maybe some day someone will compile a list of sympathetic councils.



**Susan Rodsted,  
1 Bourke Street,  
KYNEDON 3444.**

## Dear Folks,

We are looking for a house to rent about half to three-quarters of an hour drive from Brisbane as we're moving up there in the next six months. If any G.R. people have an old farmhouse for rent or know of one, we'd be pleased to hear from them. We need a place to rent/lease for at least twelve months and are used to caring for where we live. After living in a flat for 2½ years three-quarters of an acre upwards would be ideal - we need a vegie garden and room to potter. So far we have no family but will be starting one soon. It does not matter if there is only one bedroom but we would prefer electricity. We can provide several references.

**Julie and Alan Massey,  
Flat 3, 38 Hilltop Crescent,  
FAIRLIGHT 2094.**

## Dear Grass Roots Friends,

I have been looking around Monbulk V. for nearly four months now for a place to rent with a bit of land. I have looked around Gembrook, Cockatoo, Gippsland and the Upper Yarra Valley. My hopes are just about out.

I have three children, one pup, one puss and two ducks. I would eventually like to have two goats for milk and two donkeys for transport. I have looked at rents because the idea of buying shares in land, being a single mum, now almost seems a hideous delusion. Although I would still love to hear from anyone willing to pool together and/or look at the situation - going by Land Link it does seem possible. All I wish to do is live a peaceful natural life with no booze, no TV, and so on. Although savings may be low, I am sure with enough people, something could be achieved. I'm interested in any suggestions including sharing or care-taking with loving, honest people. Anywhere in Victoria near forests or country type areas - not too dry in summer.

If there is anyone who would like to write and relate your happenings I'd love to hear from you.

**Renee and Kids,  
14 Robina Road,  
MONBULK 3793.**

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

I want to build a shed on my farm during the next summer. I want to use 'alternative' building materials and methods because they are reputed to be cheaper and I wish to become acquainted with that style of building. The alternatives are many but narrow down to mud brick, rammed earth and/or Cinva Ram soil/cement blocks. Here are some things on which I need advice.

Cinva Ram soil/cement blocks seem a relatively 'safe' way to begin for an amateur. Is that so?

There are currently two machines that I know of on the market - Cinva Ram and another called Trojan Earth Block machine. Which of the two would people recommend or have they had bad experiences with them?

Are there many tricks of operation which need to be learnt in the usage of such machines or can an enthusiastic 'idiot' manage one?

Obviously, I would appreciate advice from those of you who have experience with such machines.

**Rob Lewers,  
Mannibadar,  
via LINTON 3360.**

## Dear Grass Roots People,

We are enquiring as to whether any Grass Roots readers know of or are selling a mobile home. Preferably a Bedford truck with a wooden home in reliable condition. We are coming to Brisbane from New Zealand in about mid November 1982. Please write to us and let us know the details of any trucks and a photo would be nice. We would love to hear from any other 'mobile homers' with any helpful advice or suggestions as we've never been to Australia.

**Pete, Trudi & Roscoe,  
46 Williams Street,  
NAPIER N.Z.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

I have recently purchased 14 acres of very good land at Bridgetown in the S-W of W.A. I'm working in the north trying to pay it off as quickly as possible but as with most things, it cannot be done overnight. My knowledge of growing most common vegetables is good, thanks to my father who grows most of his own on his quarter acre block, but with the material out of Grass Roots I can see other foods with which I can experiment.

**Peter Loder,  
Block 18 Room 4,  
Single Mens Quarters,  
TOM PRICE 6751.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear G.R. Readers,

We 'rebelled' in 1975 when we left our safe and secure little lives in N.Z. and came to Oz with our sole possessions in a tea chest and packing case and 'dragging our poor little children away from their loving relations and friends into a hostile world'. We've never regretted doing it although we've had lots of ups and down. The downs have been boomers but the ups make up for it. The owners of this house come back in September so we'll be up and away again - 2½ years of city living is more than enough. This time it's just tents and sleeping bags on a trailer and a lot of hope. We're going down the West Coast, all around 'down there' and back up to North Queensland. We're visiting friends and relations on the way but would love to visit G.R. type people too and see what others are doing and collect ideas. Also we'll be wanting to buy fresh eggs and vegies or do odd jobs in return for a camping spot and a bit of fresh food. We have no set plans though our intention is to be in N.Q. before the school year starts. If you think you could stand our company we'd love a letter. All mail will find us at the address below wherever we may be.

We also want information about the area from Cairns to Cooktown, or as far down as Townsville. Think the tablelands might be just about bought out by now but surely there's a little bit left! Our funds are limited but although we don't want to get into a heavy commune situation we do believe in 'caring and sharing'. We have heard rumours of families collaborating and buying a big acreage, then dividing it into smaller plots between themselves subject to council approval. We would be interested in hearing about this. Maybe there's a farmer up there looking to sell a bit of land - we'd like 5-20 acres if there's any available.

Will anyone have a farmhouse to rent or caretake around February? Don't fancy spending the wet in tents. Guess we'll be looking for a job around then also. Hubby is a builder and brought up on a dairy farm. As well he drives just about any piece of heavy machinery. I'm a townie but will give most things a try.

**Sue, Dennis, Lesley & Brendan Page,  
P.O. Box 40191,  
CASUARINA N.T. 5792.**

## Dear Foiks,

We would be interested in helping on a farm or farms in the week August 21-28 in an area generally between say Wentworth and Albury. We are a family including two boys nine and eleven and need only simple accommodation. I have had experience renovating our house in Melbourne and would be happy to work hard on any variety of jobs.

**Roy Deane,  
25 Bridge Street,  
HAMPTON 3188.  
Ph. 03-598-8979.**

## Dear Friends,

My sister and I are about to embark on a trip around Australia for the next five to six months taking in the states of South Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland, N.S.W. and Victoria, in that order. On our way we will be looking for casual work like fruit picking, farm labouring or any other odd jobs to see us through. We would be very interested in hearing from folk who could help us find work or maybe help us out with accommodation if need be. We will pay board and help out around the place.

We are country born so are quite familiar with hard work. My sister (Cheryl) has worked as a roust-a-bout for one of the local shearing contractors and has done some seasonal work at one of the vineyards. I have worked on different farms around the district and also operated bulldozers for two years for my father who is a bulldozer contractor and farmer.

We look forward to all letters which will be forwarded to us and answered in due course.

**Donna McNabb,  
R.M.B. 252,  
FRANKLAND 6396.**

## Dear G.R. Folks,

Much has happened since I last wrote. I have now been on my 5 acres for 2½ years, an experience which has changed my lifestyle and ideals greatly - or should I say enriched them. Through a strange twist of fate, I find I am now headed back to college for six months, starting at Townsville C.A.E. in late July, which brings me to the purpose of this letter or plea!

I would like to contact some down-to-earth people in or around Townsville. After such a wonderful time spent here growing my own vegetables, raising a few head of stock, etc. I really don't feel I could handle the pace of a city full-time. Consequently, I am hoping that someone either has a rented share to offer or knows of a small place to rent. All letters will be answered. I am still thoroughly enjoying Grass Roots and I think 'While The Billy Boils' is a great idea.

**John Adams,  
GLENEAGLE 4285.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

I am a lad of 16 and would like to have a pen pal of the same age who likes gardening, trucks, cars and who lives on a farm. I like reading Grass Roots very much and I like the land.

**Rod Howie,  
R.S.D. Yorkshire Road,  
MARONG 3515.**

## Dear Everyone,

We are only here since three weeks (migrating from Germany) and we do love your beautiful country. We have bought a car and campersvan and are now travelling up to Qld., and then back to N.S.W., Victoria and South Australia to find a place to settle. This will not be very easy as we need jobs - at least one (my husband is a civil engineer for applied hydraulics, I am a commercial artist). We want a minimum of 10 acres with permanent creek which we can afford, perhaps up to 20 miles apart from town or city or suburb where job will be.

Friends suggested us to stay on a camping area for up to four years, work hard and save one of our wages and then buy exactly what we want. But as we seem to lead some sort of provisional lifestyle since quite a couple of years in Germany (knowing that we would go to Australia with the aim of our own property and semi self-sufficiency) we are sick of waiting forever now.

We are vegetarian, fond of also wholemeal bread and flour which (especially bread) we cannot buy as it is nowhere to be found!! We are not too sure about the quality of the *wholemeal flour*, so can anybody help us where to get wheat and rye from (to mill it in our hand mill), preferably not chemically treated?

Horses and ponies are a most important part of our lifestyle, too. We were very sad to sell our two Icelandic geldings in overseas. We are visiting as many horse studs as possible to find out about characteristics of Australian breeds, looking for medium sized (not exceeding 14 h), well proportioned, sure-footed, good nerved, co-operative intelligent and reliable horses. Can anybody tell us where to find mules and Timor ponies?

Another urgent question re vegetarianism. Does anyone know where to get Vitamin B12 from except meat and pills (injections)?

It is very pleasant to find that the alternative lifestyle movement exists almost all over the world and Grass Roots does encourage us on our way which is not acceptable to many consumer orientated people at all. We would be very happy and thankful to receive replies to our questions as well as to contact other G.R. readers whom we could visit on our trip. Perhaps we may find another couple for buying land together (no commune, but two properties out of one). We are in our early thirties, not fanatic (except about ill-treatment of animals) and have no children. All letters will be answered.

**Wolf & Brigitte Krum C/-Butler,  
10 Hanover Street,  
WILBERFORCE 2756.**

# Feedback Link-Up Feedback

## Dear G.R. People,

We were interested to read Derek Wrigley's letter in G.R. 31. Like many others Helen and I enjoyed reading *One Straw Revolution*, but have not taken any steps toward putting the principles into practice. Considering the climatic and soil differences we think there may be many problems in obtaining successful results. Also we have not heard of any practical small scale methods of threshing and winnowing the grain. So like Derek, we would be interested in hearing from others with knowledge in this area.

Derek's other problem came as rather a surprise to us, not that he is planning to raise fish in his farm dam or dams, but that he is considering using a species which he states is a 'potentially greater threat than carp'. We intend raising fish ourselves and have been making enquiries. We were given a copy of Leaflet No 3 produced by the N.S.W. State Fisheries which lists several species of fish which are suitable for raising in farm dams, the variety chosen depending on the area in which one lives and other environmental conditions. In view of the varieties available we would be interested to learn from Derek why he has chosen Tilapia as the fish he would like to raise. He may well believe that he will be introducing the fish only to his dams and therefore there will not be any environmental threat, but we think there are many ways the fish could get from his dams into rivers and lakes and therefore consider that it would be inadvisable to raise such potentially dangerous fish when other suitable species are available.

**John Hill & Helen Turner,  
R.M.B. 197,  
BUNGENDORE 2621.**

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

Is there an energetic lady out there who does things, rather than talk, dream or read about them, who would be interested in teaming up with a 36 year old bushwacker, craftsman who dearly loves a secluded, yet satisfying home life? He has considerable self-reliance, is allergic to late nights, large crowds and aimless chatter and so does not meet many suitable ladies. A durable sense of humour recommended! I'd be pleased to hear from you.



**Bob,  
P.O. Box 117,  
DORRIGO 2453.**

## Dear G.R. People,

I would like to thank all those people who answered my request in Grass Roots. To those who have not received an answer yet, I am writing soon. You people opened up my life at the right time - the warmth and care I felt through your letters was beautiful, as you see I lost my younger brother about that time. I lost my brother physically but mentally he's always here.

I hope to be going south around Nowra to Batemans Bay soon and if there are any readers who know of places to rent or property to lease please let me know. I will not be going till round July as the death of my brother brought our family very close again and to leave so soon was not right. Keep up the good work with the magazine as it helps somebody, somewhere, every day.

**Bruce Wilson,  
38 Holdsworth Street,  
MERRYLANDS 2160.**

## Dear G.R.,

There is a growing movement of G.R. people here in the Brisbane area and business at the Closeburn Market is booming! We had our first stall there yesterday and had a wonderful time.

We want to form a Southside Grass Roots group with our own market and would be interested to hear from anyone living on this side of the river if they are interested. They can contact us 07-371-1751 (that's

Trevor) or 07-201-3635 (that's John, the writer of the letter). First names only, please, or by writing to us C/- P.O. Box 73, CARINA 4152. We had quite a big response to an advertisement in the Courier Mail personal column and it looks as if there are a lot of city GR's in the Greater Brisbane area and room for a second country style market.

As for me, from the time I first obtained G.R., I have become ever more a believer in the Gentle Lifestyle on my half acre and have met some really wonderful down-to-earthers. It is quite possible to live this way even in the city as many of us have found.

Your Feedback Link-up letters and your articles are just great and I am sure that they are a strong force for peace in this troubled world which is fast approaching the last minutes of midnight towards extinction.

**John K.**

## Dear Friends,

We are a Christian couple in our mid-twenties with a toddler, leaving suburban Townsville late July. Our aim is to share or own a small crop farm. I enjoy all types of crafts and Brian writes his own songs and is into gardening. We seek fellowship with people in N.S.W. or Victoria who are open-minded and clean living. We'd love to hear from you as soon as possible.

**Rouanne, Brian & Jasmine Winters,  
C/- Flat 10,  
106 Mount Street,  
COOGEE 2034.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

I am a resident of Queensland, returning to Australia in June next year. While I was in Australia I was a reader of your magazine, so when I decided to return, I also decided to contact you with an enquiry. I know that your magazine is widely read all over Australia by people of like mind to myself. On my return I would like to get out of the town and live quietly with my two children (ages 9 and 11). I am interested in keeping a few animals and growing some vegetables. I am aware that most subscribers have also these interests and would therefore appreciate hearing from anyone who could assist us with an offer of accommodation on preferably, a small corner where we could perhaps sit a caravan. I would not object to helping out with any work necessary (as a friend).

**Marion Duncan,  
Wendener Weg 114,  
Veltenhof, 3300 Braunschweig,  
WEST GERMANY.**

## Dear David and Meg,

I am a 22 year old girl and have been studying biological agriculture at the University of Kassel for two years. The year before this I spent working on a farm (500 pigs plus wheat, corn and apples). I had to do most of the outside work including the pigsty. It was conventional German style farming, not using biological principles. For a short time I worked together with a girl from Australia and since then I have been curious and very much interested in your country. I also have other contacts living in Western Australia. I am very interested in learning more about biological farming.

To complete my Diploma I'll probably choose a topic about the difference between animal health in conventional farming systems and biological systems. Your country is well known in this area. However, I do not want to leave plant production out of my interest. I will have holidays after this University semester (between July 1982 and March 1983 inclusively) and I am interested in spending that time on an Australian farm working with biological principles. Due to conditions set by the University I must prove that I have worked for at least six months. I have a motorbike and a car licence and could accept any job available.

**Miss Andrea Kleeberg,  
Hinter den Hofen 10,  
3430 Witzenhausen 111,  
WEST GERMANY.**



## gumnut gossip

Meg Miller

Producing this issue of Grass Roots has been a quiet affair — very organised, very calm. In fact, everything seems to have run smoothly. During these last few days we have stood around wringing our hands and muttering disbelievably 'must be something wrong' or 'must have forgotten something'. We have checked and double checked, and still the calm has persisted. After the excitement of last issue — Sunshine home on school holidays, David away, and loads of visitors — it has been rather pleasant to potter along putting in the finishing touches at will. There has, of course, been the same amount of work. In fact, there has been more than usual because we have added in a few extra pages for fireside reading to cheer you all during winter. This issue we hopped into production earlier because some of us had distracting commitments. Perhaps we should aim to have such commitments each issue — it saves on stress and bodily wear and tear!

Actually the only real excitement occurred this past Sunday. I was ensconced in the office working away while Sunshine played outside in the sun with her cars. Horrendous shrieks broke the calm. My heart missed a beat, I rushed out to discover Sunshine surrounded by a crowd of turkeys who were trampling all over her roads! I was treated to several encores of the same performance before I gave up in disgust and had to temporarily fence the turkeys off with bee boxes. So much for the idyllic calm of the country!

You will notice a proposed price rise on page 81 of this issue. We really are sorry. We have held endless discussions in an attempt to find an alternative, but with price rises across the board in the printing industry, we, like other magazines and newspapers, have had no option. It is a troubled economic climate in which we live, with few silver linings ahead. We do promise, however, that Grass Roots will continue its usual high standard of articles and information with support, friendship and know-how flowing as strongly as ever.

Several articles in this issue are the direct result of

reader requests. I find this really heartening. Knowing that you can make a request in Feedback and receive, in response, a cross section of ideas and experiences really is unique. I am sure we all benefit from this generous spirit and the varied exchange of information. In this vein, a northern reader requires medicinal information on the herb *Aloe vera* — how and for what it is used.

My fellow office workers have several requests. Could folk please print their name and address clearly when writing? You have no idea the fun generated by trying to decipher illegible handwriting and even then we do not know if our wild guesses are correct. Could poets write their name and address on each of their poems? It is not uncommon for a poem to become separated from the accompanying note. We would also appreciate poets checking their work for spelling and punctuation — it can be difficult deciding the difference between creative expression and oversight.

There are several people we wish to contact, but for varying reasons, do not have their present address. Could Iris Dawson, Russell Preston, Kevin Roper and 'Tatum' from Kirra, let us know where they can be contacted please?

Finally, David from Grantham in Queensland, sent a small poem which he felt 'conveyed the enthusiasm, feeling and need for a magazine like Grass Roots'.

*Sometimes you feel like giving up,  
Your cow's gone dry and the dog's in pup,  
The vegie garden's full of beetles and bugs,  
Not to mention the plague of slugs.  
Pig pen door is broke and busted,  
Wood shed roof is leaking where it's rusted,  
Days are long and the work is tough,  
Half these acres might have been enough.  
The repair bill on your water pump was steep,  
City friends are laughing at your heap.  
But then 'Grass Roots' arrives by mail,  
You read of others on similar trails,  
Suddenly you know you'll make it if you don't give up,  
What the hell! Maybe you can sell the pups.*



# CLAYS

## **EARTHENWARE OVENPROOF**

Is a buff coloured clay and should be fired to a high temperature (1200°C) to become ovenproof, but will make a satisfactory piece of ware even if fired to only 1100°C.

## **STONEWARE**

A white coloured clay, can be fired to as high as 1350°C without trouble and will withstand any treatment that stoneware is usually subjected to.

## **FINE STONEWARE**

Much the same as stoneware but is smoother to work and will mature at a slightly lower temperature, but will still withstand the higher temperature if required.

## **WHITE EARTHENWARE**

This is a grey-white burning clay which matures at a lower temperature than the other clays 1150°C-1250°C.

## **RAKU**

This clay is suitable for hand-building and will fire to stoneware temperature without trouble. When used for Raku it is usually filled with additional grog according to the individual requirements.

Bendigo Pottery packaged clay is also available from all leading art and craft suppliers in Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Perth and in Adelaide.

**BENDIGO POTTERY [EPSOM] PTY. LTD.**

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